



Office of the City Manager

INFORMATION CALENDAR

July 28, 2026

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Paul Buddenhagen, City Manager

Submitted by: Jordan Klein, Director, Planning and Development Department

Subject: Landmark Preservation Ordinance Notice of Decision: Elmwood Commercial Historic District /#LMIN2026-0001

INTRODUCTION

The attached Landmarks Preservation Commission Notice of Decision (NOD) is presented to the Mayor and City Council pursuant to Berkeley Municipal Code/Landmarks Preservation Ordinance (BMC/LPO) Section 3.24.160(D), which states that “the City Clerk shall make the notice available to interested members of the City Council and the public.”

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC/Commission) has denied a historic district designation for the Elmwood Commercial District, on College Avenue between Russell Street and Webster Street (Yes: Crandall, Finacom, Montilla, Orbuch; No: Fike, Gordon, Greene, Schwartz, Turner). This action is subject to a 14-day appeal period, which began after the notice was mailed on July 6, 2026.

BACKGROUND

BMC/LPO Section 3.24.190 allows the Council to certify any action of the Commission in granting or denying Landmark, or Historic District status within 90 days of the mailing of the Notice of the Decision, or October 5, 2026. Certification by Council stays all proceedings in the same manner as the filing of an appeal.

If the Council chooses to stay the action of the Commission, then a public hearing will be set. The Council must then rule on the designation within 30 days of closing the hearing, otherwise the decision of the Commission is automatically deemed affirmed.

Unless the Council wishes to review the determination of the Commission and make its own decision, the attached NOD is deemed received and filed.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE IMPACTS

Landmark designation and discretionary alteration reviews by staff and LPC provide opportunities for the adaptive re-use and rehabilitation of historic resources within the City. The rehabilitation of these resources, rather than their removal, achieves construction and demolition waste diversion, and promotes investment in existing urban centers.

POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

The Council may choose to stay the decision, in which case it would conduct a public hearing at a future date.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

There are no known fiscal impacts associated with this action.

CONTACT PERSON

Allison Riemer, Landmarks Preservation Commission Secretary, Planning and Development, 510-981-7433

Attachments:

- 1: Notice of Decision – #LMIN2026-0001/Elmwood Commercial Historic District
- 2: Landmark application



LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Notice of Decision

DATE OF BOARD DECISION: June 4, 2026

DATE NOTICE MAILED: July 6, 2026

APPEAL PERIOD EXPIRATION: July 20, 2026

EFFECTIVE DATE (Barring Appeal or Certification): October 6, 2026¹

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Landmark application #LMIN2026-0001 for the consideration of a Historic District on College Avenue between Russell and Webster Streets, also known as the Elmwood, comprised of 28 properties.

The Landmarks Preservation Commission of the City of Berkeley, after conducting a public hearing, **DENIED** the following designation:

- **Historic District designation**

- **Application Author:** Anthony Bruce, 6 Encina Place, Berkeley, CA 94705
- **Property Owners:**
 - 2900 COLLEGE AVE OWNER, HAL BRANDEL, 1933 FRANCISCO ST., BERKELEY, CA 94709
 - 2910 COLLEGE AVE OWNER, CHRISTOS TRIANTOPOULOS / HANS J HAMERLER, 27 STARVIEW DR., OAKLAND, CA 94618
 - 2924 COLLEGE AVE / 2941 COLLEGE AVE / 2944 COLLEGE AVE / 2629 ASHBY AVENUE OWNER, JOHN K GORDON / JANIS L MITCHELL, 2091 ROSE ST., BERKELEY, CA 94709
 - 2936-2940 COLLEGE AVE OWNER, GARBIS BAGHDASSARIAN / SILVA BAGHDASSARIAN, 8 CANDLESTICK RD., ORINDA, CA 94563
 - 2942 COLLEGE AVE OWNER, SRUE CORP & MAR/DAN CORP, 2437 DURANT AVE, BERKELEY CA 94704

¹ Pursuant to BMC Chapter 3.24.190, the City Council may “certify” any decision of the LPC for review, which has the same effect as an appeal. The Council must certify the LPC decision within 90 days of the mailing of the Notice of Decision. If there is no appeal or certification, the decision becomes effective the day after the certification deadline has passed.

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- 2632 ASHBY AVE OWNER, GALLARDO BROTHERS LLC, 207 E RANCH RD, SACRAMENTO, CA 95825
- 2642 Ashby Ave Owner, JAMES F GALLARDO / VIOLETTE P GALLARDO, PO BOX 8486, HUNTSVILLE, AL 35808
- 2960 COLLEGE AVE OWNER, NEIL B GOODHUE / DIANE C DELUCCHI, 2960 COLLEGE AVE, BERKELEY, CA 94705
- 2966 COLLEGE AVE OWNER, ELMWOOD THEATRE FOUNDATION/RED OAK REALTY, 1891 SOLANO AVE, BERKELEY, CA 94707
- 2974 COLLEGE AVENUE OWNER, HOMAYOON KAZEROONI / AUDREY J. SHOJI, 2924 RUSSELL ST, BERKELEY, CA 94705
- 2974 COLLEGE AVENUE OWNER, STEVEN H. OLIVER, 1035 CARLETON ST, BERKELEY, CA 94710
- 2982 COLLEGE AVE OWNER, WU SHU F BYPASS TRUST, 609 CORNELL AVE, ALBANY, CA 94706
- 2992 COLLEGE AVE OWNER, ROSE ORIENTAL RUGS INC, 1573 SOLANO AVE, BERKELEY, CA 94707
- 2705 WEBSTER ST/ 2999 COLLEGE AVE OWNER, JCJ9 PROPERTY MANAGEMENT LLC & EARL J. MARCH, 26191 N LOWER SACRAMENTO RD, ACAMPO, CA 95220
- 2995 COLLEGE AVE OWNER, JLTSOU LLC, 2995 COLLEGE AVE, BERKELEY, CA 94705
- 2993 COLLEGE AVE OWNER, WILLIAM W DINAPOLI, 2943 MAGNOLIA ST, BERKELEY, CA 94705
- 2979 COLLEGE AVENUE OWNER, ALLEN S HIBBARD, 1498 WESTVIEW DR, BERKELEY, CA 94705
- 2973 COLLEGE AVE OWNER, GABRIEL BRUCK, 16 MARIPOSA LN, ORINDA, CA 94563
- 2961 COLLEGE AVE OWNER, JEREMY M KIDSON, 2 S PARK ST, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94107
- 2959 COLLEGE AVE OWNER, ATC BUILDING COMPANY/WELLS FARGO BANK, PO BOX 2609, CARLSBAD, CA 92018
- 2947 COLLEGE AVE OWNER, BEH BUILDING LLC, 2722 WEBSTER ST, BERKELEY CA 94705
- 2935 COLLEGE AVE OWNER, WILLIAM F NOBLE, 16135 CANTERBURY LN, TRUCKEE CA 96161
- 2921 COLLEGE AVE OWNER, WILLIAM G MCNAB, 2015 BAYO CLAROS CIR, MORGAN HILL CA 95037
- 2917 COLLEGE AVE / 2905 COLLEGE AVE OWNER, SUSAN L BENNETT, 15 MORAGA VIA, ORINDA CA 94563
- 2901 COLLEGE AVE OWNER, JCJ9 PROPERTY MANAGEMENT LLC, 2207 KRUEGER DR, CONCORD CA 94520

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- 2887 COLLEGE AVE OWNER, WARD J JR MIOTTEL, PO BOX 3450, BERKELEY CA 94703
- 2832 COLLEGE AVE OWNER, ALISON F LUDWIG, 123 CRESCENT AVE, SAUSALITO, CA 94965
- 2840 COLLEGE AVE OWNER, MOSE DURST / ESTHER DURST, 2929 AVALON AVE, BERKELEY CA 94705

ZONING DISTRICT: Elmwood Commercial (C-E)

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW STATUS: This action is not subject to review under the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") because it is not a "project" pursuant to CEQA. There are no changes to the environment based on denial of this application; rather, the status quo is preserved. See Pub. Res. Code § 21065.

The application materials for this project are available online at: <https://aca-prod.accela.com/BERKELEY/Default.aspx> (Click on Zoning tab; enter permit number LMIN2026-0001; click on the "Record Info" drop down menu; click on "Attachments")

COMMISSION VOTE: 4-5-0-0

YES: CRANDALL, FINACOM, MONTILLA, ORBUCH

NO: FIKE, GORDON, GREENE, SCHWARTZ, TURNER

ABSTAIN: NONE

ABSENT: NONE

TO APPEAL THIS DECISION (see Section 3.24.300 of the Berkeley Municipal Code):

To appeal a decision of the Landmarks Preservation Commission to the City Council you must:

1. Submit a letter clearly and concisely setting forth the grounds for the appeal to the City Clerk, located at 2180 Milvia Street, 1st Floor, Berkeley. The City Clerk's telephone number is (510) 981-6900.
 - a. Pursuant to BMC Section 3.24.300.A, an appeal may be taken to the City Council by the application of the owners of the property or their authorized agents, or by the application of at least 200 residents of the City aggrieved.
2. Submit the required fee (checks and money orders must be payable to 'City of Berkeley'):

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- a. The basic fee for persons other than the applicant is \$3,000. This fee may be reduced to \$1,000 if the appeal is signed by persons who lease or own at least 50 percent of the parcels or dwelling units within 300 feet of the project site, or at least 25 such persons (not including dependent children), whichever is less. Signatures collected per the filing requirement in BMC Section 3.24.300.A may be counted towards qualifying for the reduced fee, so long as the signers are qualified. The individual filing the appeal must clearly denote which signatures are to be counted towards qualifying for the reduced fee.
- b. The fee for all appeals by Applicants is \$6,000.
3. The appeal must be received prior to 5:00 p.m. on the "APPEAL PERIOD EXPIRATION" date shown above (if the close of the appeal period falls on a weekend or holiday, then the appeal period expires the following business day).

If no appeal is received, the decision will be final on the first business day following expiration of the appeal period.

NOTICE CONCERNING YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS:

If you object to this decision, the following requirements and restrictions apply:

1. If you challenge this decision in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the Landmarks Preservation Commission at, or prior to, the public hearing.
2. You must appeal to the City Council within fourteen (14) days after the Notice of Decision of the action of the Landmarks Preservation Commission is mailed. It is your obligation to notify the Land Use Planning Division in writing of your desire to receive a Notice of Decision when it is completed.
3. Pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure Section 1094.6(b) and Government Code Section 65009(c)(1), no lawsuit challenging a City Council decision, as defined by Code of Civil Procedure Section 1094.6(e), regarding a use permit, variance or other permit may be filed more than ninety (90) days after the date the decision becomes final, as defined in Code of Civil Procedure Section 1094.6(b). Any lawsuit not filed within that ninety (90) day period will be barred.
4. Pursuant to Government Code Section 66020(d)(1), notice is hereby given to the applicant that the 90-day protest period for any fees, dedications, reservations, or other exactions included in any permit approval begins upon final action by the City, and that any challenge must be filed within this 90-day period.
5. If you believe that this decision or any condition attached to it denies you any reasonable economic use of the subject property, was not sufficiently related to a legitimate public purpose, was not sufficiently proportional to any impact of the project, or for any other reason constitutes a "taking" of property for public use without just compensation under the California or United States Constitutions, your appeal of this decision must include the following information:

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- A. That this belief is a basis of your appeal.
- B. Why you believe that the decision or condition constitutes a "taking" of property as set forth above.
- C. All evidence and argument in support of your belief that the decision or condition constitutes a "taking" as set forth above.

If you do not do so, you will waive any legal right to claim that your property has been taken, both before the City Council and in court.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Questions about the project should be directed to the project planner, Allison Riemer, at (510) 981-7433 or ariemer@berkeleyca.gov. All project application materials may be viewed at the Permit Service Center (Zoning counter), 1947 Center Street, 3rd Fl., during regular business hours.


ATTEST:
Allison Riemer, Secretary
Landmarks Preservation Commission

cc: City Clerk

Applicant: Anthony Bruce, 6 Encina Place, Berkeley, CA 94705

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LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

NOTICE OF DECISION

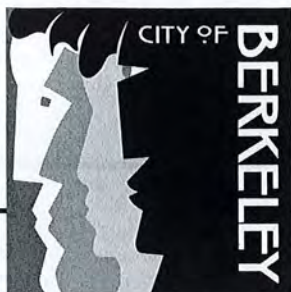
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Planning and Development
1947 Center St, 2nd Floor
Berkeley, CA 94704

LANDMARKS APPLICATION

planning@berkeleyca.gov • Phone (510) 981-7410, TDD (510) 981-7450

Landmarks Application

For:

☐ Alteration

☐ Sign Permit

☒ Landmark Designation

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Address(es):

Unit(s)/Suite(s) #:

Assessor Parcel Number(s):

Project Description:

(include applicable demolition/removal, proposed use(s), total square feet of new/addition, height, number of units and very-low income units, and parking)

Application-Specific Info:

Associated Use or Zoning Permit / Sign Permit / Building Permit number(s) (if applicable):

Does your project include demolition of, or exterior modifications to, a designated City of Berkeley landmark, structure of merit, or structure in a historic district?

☒ NO ☐ YES (refer to the "Landmark Preservation Commission: Structural Alteration Permit and Design Review Submittal Requirements")

Application to designate a landmark, structure of merit or historic district?

☐ NO ☒ YES (refer to the "Landmark, Structure of Merit or Historic District Designation Form")

PROPERTY OWNER'S NAME:

reference application

Owner's Mailing Address:

Phone Number:

Email:

APPLICANT'S NAME (or enter "same."):

Anthony Bruce

Applicant's Mailing Address:

6 Encina Place
Berkeley CA 94705

Phone Number::

510 847-1379

Email:

anthony@berkeleyheritage.com

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT LANDMARKS PERMITS:

Landmark Alterations

Landmarks Designation Petition

Landmarks Designation Form

Landmarks Alteration Submittal Checklist (must accompany this application)

How to Submit a Zoning Project Application

Supplemental Land Use applications, forms, and instructions



LANDMARKS APPLICATION

DRAWINGS PROTECTED BY COPYRIGHT STATEMENT

Effective January 1, 2023, (State Government Code, Section 65103.5 (e), SB 1214), if an official copy of architectural drawings are submitted to the Land Use Division of the Planning and Development Department as part of a zoning permit application, the design professional (or the owner of the copyright if different from the design professional) may submit a separate "site plan" or "massing diagram" for posting online or for distribution to the public.

If a separate "site plan" or "massing diagram" is not submitted in addition to the official architectural plans, permission is deemed granted to the Land Use Division to post online or to provide to the public copies of the architectural drawings without the restrictions that would otherwise apply.

A massing diagram and a site plan are defined as follows per Government Code Section 65103.5 (f): "Massing diagram" means a document that displays the three-dimensional form of a building and describes the general profile, bulk, setbacks, and size of the building, but does not contain specific architectural detail.

"Site plan" means a document for a project that is drawn to scale and displays all of the following: property lines, setback lines, topographic lines, easements, drainage, utilities, lighting, driveways, surrounding streets and traffic flow, parking lots and parking spaces, landscaped areas, setback distance between buildings and property lines, outline of existing and proposed buildings and structures, distance between buildings, and ground sign location.

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING (required):

- ☒ My application includes a separate "site plan" or "massing diagram," defined in Government Code Section 65103.5(f), for posting online or for distribution to the public.
- ☒ Permission is granted to make publicly available the submitted architectural drawings without restriction to posting online or distribution to the public.

Under penalty of perjury, I certify that:

- (1) the application materials are true and complete to the best of my knowledge; and
- (2) if provided, the attached paper and electronic copies of this application are the same; and
- (3) I agree to pay all expenses associated with this application

(*Owner's signature, or signed letter authorizing applicant to apply on owner's behalf, is required for all applications)

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE:

Anthony Bruce

Printed Name:

Anthony Bruce

Date:

3-2-2026

OWNER'S SIGNATURE:

See application

Printed Name:

Date:

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
HISTORIC DISTRICT APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

2832 – 2999 College Avenue
2705 Webster Street
2632 – 2648 Ashby Avenue
2700, 2701, 2711 Ashby Avenue



Elmwood Commercial District, Ashby and College avenues looking north. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Elmwood Commercial District, College Avenue looking north from Webster Street. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Addresses:** 2832, 2836, 2838, 2840, 2842, 2887, 2900, 2901, 2901 1/2, 2903, 2903 1/2, 2904, 2905, 2907, 2908, 2910, 2909, 2911, 2912, 2913, 2914, 2915, 2917, 2918, 2921, 2923, 2924, 2925, 2926, 2927, 2928, 2930, 2935, 2936, 2937, 2939, 2940, 2941, 2942, 2943, 2944, 2945, 2947, 2949. 2956, 2959, 2960, 2961, 2963, 2965, 2966, 2967, 2969, 2973, 2975. 2977, 2979, 2980, 2981, 2982, 2983, 2984, 2985, 2986, 2987, 2988, 2989, 2991, 2992, 2993, 2995, 2996, 2997, 2998, 2999 **College Avenue;** 2705 **Webster Street;** 2627, 2629, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2642, 2644, 2646, 2648, 2700, 2701, 2711 **Ashby Avenue.**

County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705

2. **Assessor's Parcel Numbers:** 052-1568-00400, 052-1568-00500, 052-1568-00600, 052-1568-00800, 052-1568-00900, 052-1568-01101, 052-1568-01201, 052-1573-01400, 052-1568-01500, 052-1573-00100, 052-1573-00200, 052-1573-00300, 052-1573-00401, 052-1573-00600, 052-1567-00400, 052-1567-06301, 052-1567-06401, 052-1567-06600, 052-1567-06700, 052-1567-06800, 052-1567-01700, 052-1567-01600, 052-1567-01800, 052-1567-01900, 052-1567-02000, 052-1567-02100, 052-1567-02200, 052-1567-02300, 052-1567-02401, 053-1696-01500, 053-1695-01100, 053-1695-01202.

Dimensions:

Cross Streets: Russell Street, Ashby Avenue, Webster Street

3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: Ø

4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**

a. Building(s): Yes **Garden:** **Other Feature(s):** monuments, parking lots

b. Landscape or Open Space: Yes

c. Historic Site: No

d. District: Yes

e. Other: Entire property

5. **Historic Names:** College Avenue business district

Commonly Known Name: The Elmwood

6. **Date of Construction:** 1907-1983 **Factual:** Yes

Source of Information: City of Berkeley Applications for Building Permits

7. **Architects:** John B. Anthony, W. B. Baker, Alexander A. Cantin, Albert W. Cornelius, Cummings & Weymouth, Clarence Casebolt Dakin, Edgar+Thieme, Fog City Architects, Alben Froberg, Harold F. Genss, B. Reede Hardman, Holder/Parlette, Richard Alan Hurley, Hutchison & Mills, Bart Jones, George F. King, Edwin Wilkins Larmer, Thomas Lavin, Roger Lee, Leland S. Lewis, Eugene K. Martin, Max R. Garcia & Associates, Van V. Midgley, Solomon Morris, Ted Moulton, John Olmquist, James W. Plachek, The Ratcliff Architects, Walter H. Ratcliff, Jr., Roy O. Long Company, Peter Gray Scott, Ronald Dean Senna, Harvey Slocombe, A. W. Smith, Edwin Lewis Snyder, John Sullivan, The Bay Architects, William H. Weeks, A. J. Yerrick.

8. Builders: John A. Bischoff, Isaac W. Bridenbecker, Carlson L. Prest Company, Cedarborg & Anderson, Carroll Reginald Collupy, David & Company, William Dufour, Dunnie Construction Company, David M. Etter, K. E. Parker Company, Jacob Kollmer, Lambert & Wells, Edwin Wilkins Larmer, Leland S. Lewis, W. H. Livingstone, Van V. Midgley, Solomon Morris, John Olmquist, Patrick Bros., John Perona, H. C. Pfrang, R. W. Poole, Roy O. Long Company, Ed Sheffield, Steven Oliver & Company, F. Walter Thaxter, Leslie R. Wilson, A. J. Yerrick, E. L. Younger.

9. Style: Storefront

10. Original Owners: John A. Bischoff; Breed & Bancroft, Inc.; Battista Cianciarulo; Dr. Charles C. Conwell & Mrs. Julia Ann Conwell; Floyd C. Curry; Thomas S. & Janet David; John Faust Dondero; Lester R. Dray; Mildred M. Dye & James S. Dye; Frank Gallardo; Dr. Samuel W. Hussey; Harold P. Jennings; K. E. Parker Company; Fred C. Koerber; Caroline Litch, Emma Klumpp, Elizabeth Etter; David McCullough; Harry M. Martin; Mercantile Trust Company of California; Van V. Midgley; Solomon Morris; Steven Oliver, John Millar, and Mr. Komes; Frederick E. Romie; Olive Sager; Bert Thomas Scott; Dr. Edward Ernest Sparhawk; Mrs. Annie E. Stover; Bernard W. White; W. R. White; Leslie R. Wilson.

Original Use: commercial, residential, institutional, park

11. Present Owner: 2900 College Associates LLC;

ATC Building Company; Baghdassarian Garbis & Silva Trs; Barrett William S & Thatcher Ellen etal; BEH Building LLC; Bennett Susan L Tr; City of Berkeley; Claudia Hunka; College Avenue Building LLC; Delucchi Diane C & Goodhue; Dinapoli William W; Dinapoli William & Harris Marc; Durst Mose & Esther O Trs; Elmwood Theater Foundation; Gallardo Brothers LLC; Gallardo James F, Violette P, & Gregory F Trs; Gordon Commercial Properties LLC; Gordon John K & Mitchell Janis L Trs & Gordon etal; Gordon John K Tr, Mitchell Janis L Tr, Gordon Molly M Tr; Hibbard Lisbeth A Trust; JCI9 Property Management LLC & March Earl J Tr; JLTsou LLC; Kazerooni Homayoon & Shoji Audrey; Kidson Jeremy M etal; Ludwig Alison F Tr; Miottell Ward J Jr Trustee; Neil Brian; Nishimura Jodi; Noble William F Tru; Plant Edward M III & Virginia B Trs; Rose Oriental Rugs Inc.; Srue Corporation & Mar/Dan Corporation; The Herbert Michael Jorgensen and Jean M. Jorgensen Revocable Living Trust-1996; Triantopoulos Christos Tr & Hammerler Hans J & etal; Trust Wu Shu Tr Bypass Trust; White, Catherine Y Trust etal.

Present Occupant: several (*see supportive material*)

12. Present Use: commercial, residential, institutional, park; parking lot

Current Zoning: C-E

Adjacent Property Zoning: R-1; R-2; R-2A

13. Present Condition of Property:

Exteriors: Excellent **Interiors:** unknown **Grounds:** Excellent

Has the property's exterior been altered? some buildings have been altered

14. DESCRIPTION.

The Elmwood Commercial District is basically a two-block-long stretch of commercial activity along College Avenue between Webster Street at the south and Russell Street at the north. These two blocks of College are bisected by Ashby Avenue (Highway 13) that runs through the center of the District. The District then extends two lots north of Russell on both sides of College and also extends west on Ashby Avenue approximately two-thirds of the block.

The District application includes thirty-four parcels. Most of these parcels have been developed with commercial buildings; one is an institutional building (U. S. Post Office); two are City-owned parkways; and one is a parking lot.

The majority of the buildings in the District are one story. There are four two-story buildings, one three-story building, and one one-story building with a penthouse. The bank building is officially a one-story building, but its height is equal to two stories.

The first building to be constructed in the District was the Koerber Building, begun in May 1907, at the northwest corner of Ashby and College avenues. The commercialization of the two blocks of College was complete in 1928 with the construction of the Sparhawk Building. 1932 brought the northerly extension of



Elmwood Commercial District, looking south on College Avenue from Russell Street. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Elmwood Commercial District, looking north on College Avenue from Webster Street. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

the district on the east side of College with the construction of the Safeway building. The west side of College was extended north with the construction of the David Building in 1972 and the commercial conversion of the Bischoff Apartment Building, also in 1972. The District



Looking south on College from the Safeway store in 1944. Many retractable awnings and telephone poles—and even a streetcar—are visible. Found on-line.



Russell and College in the late fall with the golden ginkgo trees. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

extended east along Ashby behind the bank building with the addition of a landscaped parking lot in 1965. Two new commercial buildings have replaced earlier commercial buildings: the Gallardo Building in 1950 and Elmwood Village in 1983. There have been no changes to the District since 1983.

There are three distinct stylistic periods in the development of the District. The buildings from the earliest period (1907–1910) all had wood siding, and the Colonial Revival style prevailed. Seven buildings were built during these years. Five remain. The buildings from the 1910s were, for the most part, faced with stucco and had geometric ornamentation lightly reflecting that of the Viennese Secession. Seven buildings were built between 1912 and 1916. Of those seven, six remain. The 1920s brought more variety and more decorative touches, such as tile work. Eighteen buildings were built between 1920 and 1928; all remain.

Over the years, a number of buildings have been altered, although most remain in nearly original condition. The shopfronts have not fared as well. The pristine shopfronts are noted in the Application's supportive material, with the Morris Building being one of the best examples.

College Avenue itself is an unusually narrow street for a business district, but it managed to accommodate two sets of parallel tracks for streetcars from about 1903 until they were removed in 1947 and replaced with a bus line. The street supports two-way traffic and metered parallel parking. There is one mid-block crosswalk (between Russell and Ashby) that has been so marked for at least seventy years.



For most of the District's existence, the streets were enlivened by retractable canvas awnings that sheltered each shopfront from the sun. With muted colors, in both stripes and solids, the awnings "dressed" the fronts of the commercial buildings. Most of them were still in use in the 1980s; today there are only a handful remaining.

One of the new lamp posts installed in 1986. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

Most of the awning boxes have been covered over and some merchants have installed fixed-in-place awnings.

During the “awning age” the street was bereft of any form of greenery and the awnings were a necessity. In 1986, the merchants, led by Burl Willes, planted ginkgo trees along the two main commercial blocks of College. They have now matured. Not only do they provide shade to

shops and pedestrians, they also turn the Elmwood Commercial District into a path of gold in the fall.

Also in 1986, electrical lines were put underground and the ubiquitous wooden telephone poles were removed. At the same time, new 1920s-style classic lamp posts were installed on the two blocks of College between Russell and Webster.

15. HISTORY.

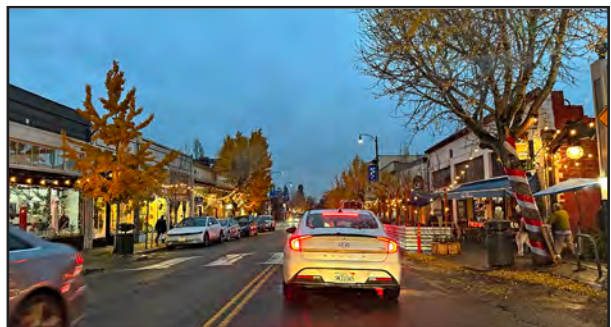
The Elmwood Commercial District has been in the news of late. The City Council would like to up-zone the blocks of College Avenue between Dwight Way and the Oakland border in order to allow much taller buildings. Of course, up-zoning would destroy the historic character of the entire length of College which is lined with an attractive variety of early twentieth century houses as well as apartment buildings from the 1920s.

Hardest hit would be the vibrant Elmwood Commercial District with its charming low-scale architecture. This is one of Berkeley’s “stand-alone” business districts, that does not merge with other business districts. It’s historic neighborhood-scaled ambiance, providing many essentials and a movie theater, is an attraction for locals as well as regional shoppers and is an on-going reason for its commercial success. Consequently, the two blocks feel self-contained in the way that the Main Street of a small town does. The envisioned tall apartment houses would not necessarily even contain space for retail uses, thus changing the District, its historic character, and community service—for all time.

The Early Setting.

The Elmwood Commercial District was an unincorporated part of Alameda County until it was annexed by Berkeley in 1891. It consisted of open land, country estates, and ranches. Without transportation, it was too far from the

center of town to develop into the residential subdivisions that exist today, although two enterprising individuals did just that. Mark Ashby created the Claremont Tract in 1886. This tract



*College Avenue decked out for the holiday season.
Anthony Bruce, 2025.*

runs west on Ashby from the southwest corner of College and Ashby. Harvey Haseltine had purchased the Kelsey ranch (east side of College and north of Russell) and subdivided it as Berkeley View Homestead in 1891.

The remainder of the land on which the District sits was not opened for development until after 1900 when there was a promise of a street-car line on College Avenue. The Berry-Bangs Tract opened in stages between 1902 and 1903. Its eastern boundary was College Avenue, and it extended north to Derby from Ashby. Elmwood Park was subdivided in 1905 on the east side of College Avenue, running between Russell and Webster streets. The final subdivision, of which the Elmwood Commercial District is



Surrounding neighborhood about 1910. Looking east from Benvenue, showing houses on College between Russell and Stuart. Unfinished Claremont Hotel in the distance. Bethany Westenberg Collection, BAHA Archives.

a part, is the Dutard Property Tract, opened in August 1906. The southern half of the block of the west side of College between Ashby and Webster is in the Dutard Property.

When the Key Route's "K" line was established on College Avenue in 1904, the area was no longer considered remote. House-building began in earnest after that, and the aftermath of the 1906 Earthquake intensified the building boom that was begun with the establishment of Key System trains in 1903.

From the beginning, the area caught the attention of homebuilders. Perhaps it was the level land and the elegant, straight avenues running off to infinity. Or the fact that the building lots were elevated enough on Berkeley's sloping plain to afford a bay view, at least from second-story windows, without perching one's house on a steep hillside.

Substantial and varied houses were built along these streets, with a rhythm created by the unfolding series of gable and hip roofs, bay windows, and porches. Homesites here were coveted by both Berkeleyans and newcomers alike, and the area soon became known for its Berkeley "brown-shingles."

Most houses were built by 1914 and reflect the architectural styles of the time. Many property

owners commissioned Bay Area architects to design their new homes, and the streets abound with the work of well-known—and less well-known—designers.

Commercial Beginnings.

This is the setting in which the Elmwood Commercial District developed. Frederick Charles Koerber built the first commercial building in this area. He was a grocer in San Jose before moving to Oakland in 1904.

As Daniella Thompson wrote, "A shrewd businessman, in 1907 Koerber constructed a building of stores and apartments at the junction of Ashby and College avenues, where the Key Route's streetcar made a stop. The Koerber grocery was relocated to this building, and the owners took up residence in one of the apartments on the second floor.

"The upscale grocery trade was based on home deliveries, and Koerber delivered. Business flourished, and Koerber quickly added to his holdings on adjacent lots. In 1909 he obtained permits to construct two one-story stores on Ashby Avenue. By 1911, he owned five contiguous commercial buildings."

Koerber's buildings—one of which was a wood and coal yard—were constructed at the far southeast corner of the Berry-Bangs Tract. The



Looking north on College at Ashby. The Elmwood Commercial District's first building is at the left. It was built by Fred Koerber in 1907. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

tract's advertising brochure states, "Residences only. No stores or wood yards." Most likely, there were no deed restrictions to enforce this rule, or, perhaps the developers soon realized that a corner store and coal yard would benefit the growing population.

Zoning Comes to America.

By 1910, there were six single-family residences on College between Russell and Webster. All was fine until the Dondero Building was completed at College and Russell in 1913. The Dondero Building had a major impact on its surroundings. When it was built, it was the first commercial encroachment on the east side of College Avenue in the Elmwood Park tract, which had been assumed by homebuilders to be a *residential* tract. Two houses stood very close on College Avenue to the Dondero Building. Its construction was an unacceptable shock to these two new homeowners. Thus, Orville Root moved his house to Ashby Place in 1913. The Dondero Building was the first impact to later trigger Berkeley's first zoning decision.

Next to the Roots' house on College was a shingled bungalow built in 1909 for newlyweds Ava and Oscar Barber on a lot purchased by her father from the Elmwood Park developers Breed & Bancroft. The Barbers played an important role in the implementation of the nation's first zoning ordinance.

Ava Earle Barber recalled in the 1970s that within a few years after moving into their new home, a commercial building was built on their block, from lot line to lot line. They were taken aback. By 1915, another commercial building had been built two doors away.

The nearby Claremont subdivision (east of Claremont Avenue, and developed simultaneously with Elmwood Park) had deed restrictions limiting what could be built there: *only* single-family residences. Elmwood Park did not have deed restrictions. Mrs. Barber felt that purchasers should have been told by the developers when they bought property in Elmwood that there was no guarantee that commercial ventures would not be built on the adjoining lots.

Before zoning, cities, as they grew, naturally created informal districts—residential, commercial, industrial—but there was nothing to prevent the stray shop building or factory from being built in a residential neighborhood, or houses built beside factories. The concept of city planning was in the air in Berkeley around the time the Barber House was built. In 1913, city planner Dr. Werner Hegemann was engaged to make a report on the City of Berkeley. (The report was expanded and ultimately published by both Berkeley and Oakland, and is still used as a reference today.) This led to

the City establishing a City Planning Committee in July 1914, and a full-fledged commission in June 1915. Duncan McDuffie, developer of the Claremont district, whose abiding interests were nature conservation and city planning, was appointed president of the commission. McDuffie had introduced building restrictions in Claremont, knowing that this was the only way to ensure a neighborhood of homogeneous use. Walter Ratcliff, as City Architect, also served on the first commission.

In the Commission's report to the City in June 1916, it was stated that its most important accomplishment during its first year was securing a zoning ordinance for Berkeley. The zoning ordinance was established by the City Council on March 28, 1916, several months before New York City (considered the first city in the United States to have a zoning ordinance) adopted theirs in July 1916.

As Berkeley had long been considered a city of homes, the first ordinance defined only different types of residential districts, with commercial and industrial to follow. Another feature of the original ordinance was that zoning districts were to be granted by the City in response to petition by interested property owners. The Commission wrote that the purpose of such an ordinance was to "further the natural grouping of like activities by preventing sporadic invasions [of a different type of use], and thus to bring about the orderly and economic development of the city, to stabilize values, protect property owners, and conserve the public health and welfare."

The City's first decision under the zoning ordinance zoned the Elmwood neighborhood for single-family homes, but the lots facing College Avenue were zoned commercial. The McCullough Building was built next door to the



The intersection of College and Ashby avenues, the heart of the Elmwood business district, in the early 1950s. Note that both stone pillars are still standing. In the foreground is the current Wells Fargo Bank designed by Walter Ratcliff. Other businesses can be seen: Safeway (at the far end), Topside Market, College Avenue Electric, Coles Shoes, Furs by Bruce, The Ivy Shoppe, Bill's Model Shoe Shop, Ye Olde Cradle Shoppe, and, hidden behind the Hunter Jewelry sign, Bolfig's Elmwood Hardware. Berkeley Gazette photo by Martin J. Cooney, BAHA Archives

Barbers' house soon after the zoning decision, and in December of 1916 they moved their house to Webster Street.

The District Develops its own Character.

The Elmwood Commercial District began by offering necessities to this outlying area. The early businesses included a grocery, a pharmacy, a barber shop, creamery, dry cleaners, shoe repair, and a wood and coal yard, among others.

Entertainment arrived in the District in 1914 with the opening of a motion picture theater, the Strand. An electric shop appeared in 1916. During those years a real estate office opened and another grocery and a produce market.

After a hiatus of construction during the first world war and the flu epidemic, the Elmwood hit its stride with many new buildings and a much wider variety of businesses. There were now shops that offered more than the bare necessities: gift shops, a dry goods store, antique shops, bakeries, clothing stores, a news stand, delicatessen, an interior decorator, hat shops, beauty parlors, a florist, hardware store, watch repair, and a bank. There also began to be an abundance of certain types of businesses. There were now two pharmacies, several groceries, shoe repair shops, and cleaners. The 1920s also brought restaurants to the Elmwood. The first

was Helen Montgomery's Ye Old Homestead Cider Company, which opened in 1923. It was a cozy, old-fashioned place with wood paneling and a fireplace. It was joined by the Yama Yama Dining room, the Elmwood Grill, and the Augusta Inn.

The Elmwood Commercial District presented a cosmopolitan flair. Elmwood merchants, going back to 1910, represented many different ethnicities and nationalities. Beginning with a Japanese-owned dry cleaners and a shoe repair shop in 1910, there were several Japanese businesses over the years, including a gift shop, a florist, and an embroidery shop. There were Chinese-owned restaurants and laundries. There were at least three Black proprietors: of a restaurant, a shine parlor, and a shoe repair shop. Immigrant merchants came from many countries, such as England, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Armenia, Syria, Italy, Spain, and Russia. The flavor of the shops reflected the origins of these merchants.

Although the Elmwood Commercial District is *commercial*, there have been people residing in the buildings since the first one was built in 1907. The Koerber Building was designed with apartments on the second floor. The Bischoff Building from 1921 is also two-stories with apartments on the second floor. The College



Looking north on College to the Safeway at Russell. Byron Bolfig, 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.



College Avenue looking north to Ashby. Byron Bolfin, 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.

Dyeing and Cleaning Works from 1910 was built with a dormitory at the back of the lot and at times there were as many as eighteen people living on the premises.

Other merchants also had live-work situations, either living at the back of the shop space or on a mezzanine constructed at the back. Quite a few shops were altered by the addition of a mezzanine, but it is not known whether they were all used for sleeping quarters. Another surprising residential use was put into operation when there was a need for wartime housing during the Second World War. At least five shops in four different buildings were temporarily converted to apartments. After the war, the spaces were returned to commercial use. A unique residential use occurred in 1916 when the last remaining single-family home was raised and a shop building was constructed underneath. The family continued to live in their elevated house for many years. (This is now the site of Elmwood Village,)

The First Crisis.

During construction of the Caldecott Tunnel, Ashby Avenue and Tunnel Road became a part of State Highway 13. When the tunnel opened in 1937, there was a marked increase in traf-

fic that became an annoyance for both homeowners and shop owners. There was talk by the City of widening Ashby. Finally, in 1942, the City used State funds to cut a diagonal through the block east of College and remove a troublesome curve in the road. This straightening of the highway was said to be necessary for the efficient movement of Army trucks in case of an emergency. But all this was small compared to the threat that came after the war.

As Steven Finacom previously wrote for a BAHA publication:

“Fortunately, a full Ashby widening was once again postponed, since it would have meant further removal of houses from Piedmont to Claremont, or, at the least, erosion of already narrow front yards. As it was, the new ‘alignment’ took out six houses; these were sold off by the City for prices ranging from \$275 to \$1,850 and they were moved elsewhere.

“After World War II, a new traffic-related threat to the neighborhood loomed. The State was undertaking a massive highway program, and [in one of three different proposed routes, route “A”] Ashby was slated to become a full freeway, cutting from the tunnel to Interstate 80. This would have been the most dramatic

change possible for the Elmwood, something similar to what happened to Oakland's neighborhoods with Highway 24 [route "C," the chosen proposal].

"Ashby Avenue and other nearby residents raised the alarm, however, and Berkeley had its own mini 'freeway revolt' in the 1950s that led to the State's canceling the Ashby freeway project. Neighborhood historian Burl Willes says that the Elmwood Soda Fountain at Russell and College had a petition at the counter against the freeway as early as 1951. Residents all along Ashby through South Berkeley fought tenaciously and successfully to save their neighborhoods from freeway obliteration."

The Next Crisis.

In 1981 the Elmwood pharmacy was the center of a neighborhood battle to "save the Elmwood" from skyrocketing rents. Rising rents were already affecting many of the merchants, but in 1981 a group of investors were on the cusp of buying the Bischoff Building. Their plan was to raise rents by 600%, effectively putting the pharmacy, the soda fountain, and the other shops out of business. Neighborhood resident Barbara Lubin started a campaign to save the businesses in the Elmwood. Save the

Elmwood, with encouragement of fountain owner "Ozzie" Osborne, set up a card table on the sidewalk daily for the next year. Through the group's efforts, Measure I was placed on the June 1982 ballot. It passed, giving Berkeley the first commercial rent control ordinance in the country. Exorbitant rent increases would now be a thing of the past. However, it was a short-term victory, as the State legislature banned such ordinances in 1987.

The Elmwood Today.

Now, 119 years after the first commercial building was built, the Elmwood Commercial District is a thriving retail hub. And happily, there does not seem ever to have been a moment when the district was *not* thriving.

From the beginning, the Elmwood strove to supply the everyday needs of the surrounding residential neighborhoods. Once those basic needs were met, shops to satisfy more recreational or aesthetic desires were added, such as toy stores, antiques stores, florists, and gift shops. Restaurants came to the Elmwood in the 1920s. These businesses began to draw customers from elsewhere; customers who might also patronize the more basic businesses as well.

Today, although the district has lost a pharmacy



College Avenue looking south from Russell Street in November 1970. BAHA Archives.

and a hardware store, a healthy balance has been restored, and the district is alive and well. The only threat on the horizon to the future of this very special business district is the City's current desire to change the zoning. This could spell the end of the unique and welcoming Elmwood Commercial District that generations of Berkeleyans have patronized and cherished.

A carefree autumn afternoon in the Elmwood Commercial District. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



16. SIGNIFICANCE.

The Elmwood Commercial District is one of Berkeley's most remarkable and best-preserved neighborhood shopping districts. It is set in the middle of a large metropolitan area, but retains the feeling of a small town "Main Street" complete with movie theater, post office, bank, and a public library nearby. "To walk the blocks is to step back into a pleasant time." So began a Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association walking tour of the Elmwood business district led in 1982. The same can be said today, with its vibrant specialty shops, bookstores, and a variety of restaurants.

Architecturally, the buildings that make up the Elmwood Commercial District represent some of the best in commercial design of the 1920s. Architects such as Walter Ratcliff and Hutchinson & Mills contributed their design skills, as did local builder John A. Bischoff, who constructed an entire half-block of memorable shop buildings. Superb decorative tile work is a special characteristic of the District.

Most of the shopfronts still feature inset entries, hardwood doors, tile bulkheads, copper Kawnear framing for display windows, and transom windows. These details reinforce the traditional feeling of the commercial buildings and of the District as a whole. And they boost the economic vitality of the District by giving it

an historic ambience that is especially appealing. The Elmwood is a regional draw for those who enjoy shopping in a district with an historic atmosphere, at a time when such places have become vanishingly rare.

The area is also significant, because—despite alterations over the years—the buildings are essentially intact. Only a handful of original buildings have been replaced, and only four new buildings have built since 1928. The original low-scale has been maintained, and the few two-story buildings, each impressive in design, serve as anchors for the surrounding pedestrian-welcoming low buildings.



The Elmwood Theater. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

Features to Preserve.

- the buildings
- the parking lots
- the parked areas

17. HISTORIC VALUE— Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes
Architectural Value— Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

18. IS THE PROPERTY ENDANGERED? Yes

19. BIBLIOGRAPHY.

City of Berkeley Applications for Building Permits.

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Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.

“A Profile of the Elmwood: Trends and Counter-Trends in a Berkeley Neighborhood Commercial District” Joanna Callenbach, Geography 181 class paper, Spring 1978.

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Various Elmwood directory folders, published between 1974 and 2002.

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Thomas and Louise Hicks House Landmark Application, Daniella Thompson, 2008.

“A Village Within a City,” *San Francisco Examiner*, 21 May 1989.

“Beautiful Benvenue, Elegant Hillegass” by Anthony Bruce, *Beautiful Benvenue, Elegant Hillegass*, Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association, 2008.

“The Ashby Cut” by Steven Finacom, *Elmwood Park*, Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association, 2015.

“Elmwood Business District” by Anthony Bruce, *Elmwood Park*, Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association, 2015.

20. RECORDER.

Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird, 2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

18 February 2026

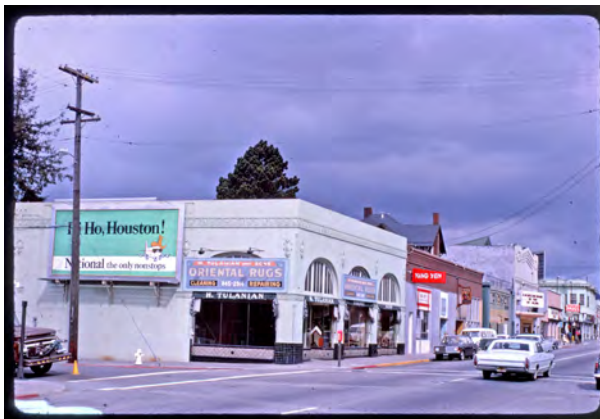
Additional Photographs.



Looking east on Ashby from College, showing the diagonal Ashby cut from 1942. Anthony Bruce, 2020.



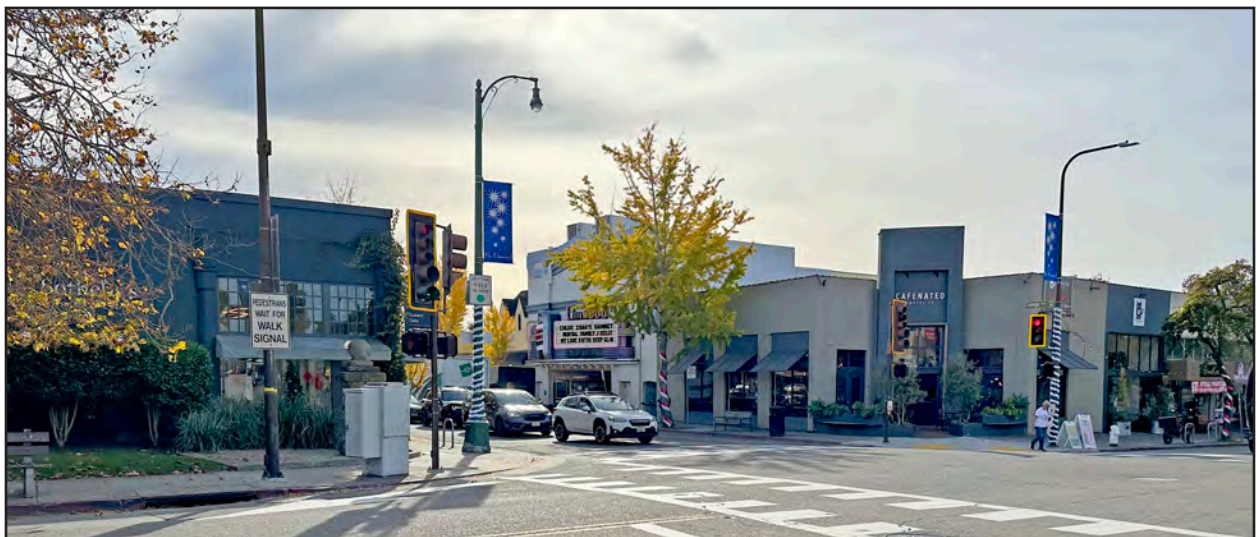
The mid-block crosswalk in the middle of the northern block of College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Looking north along College from Webster in March 1969. Several of the buildings were painted "hospital green" in the 1950s. BAHA Archives.



The intersection of College and Ashby, hazy with wildfire smoke. Anthony Bruce, August 2020.



The intersection of College and Ashby looking to the southwest. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

Additional Photographs.



*East side of College mid-block between Russell and Ashby.
Byron Bolfig, 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.*

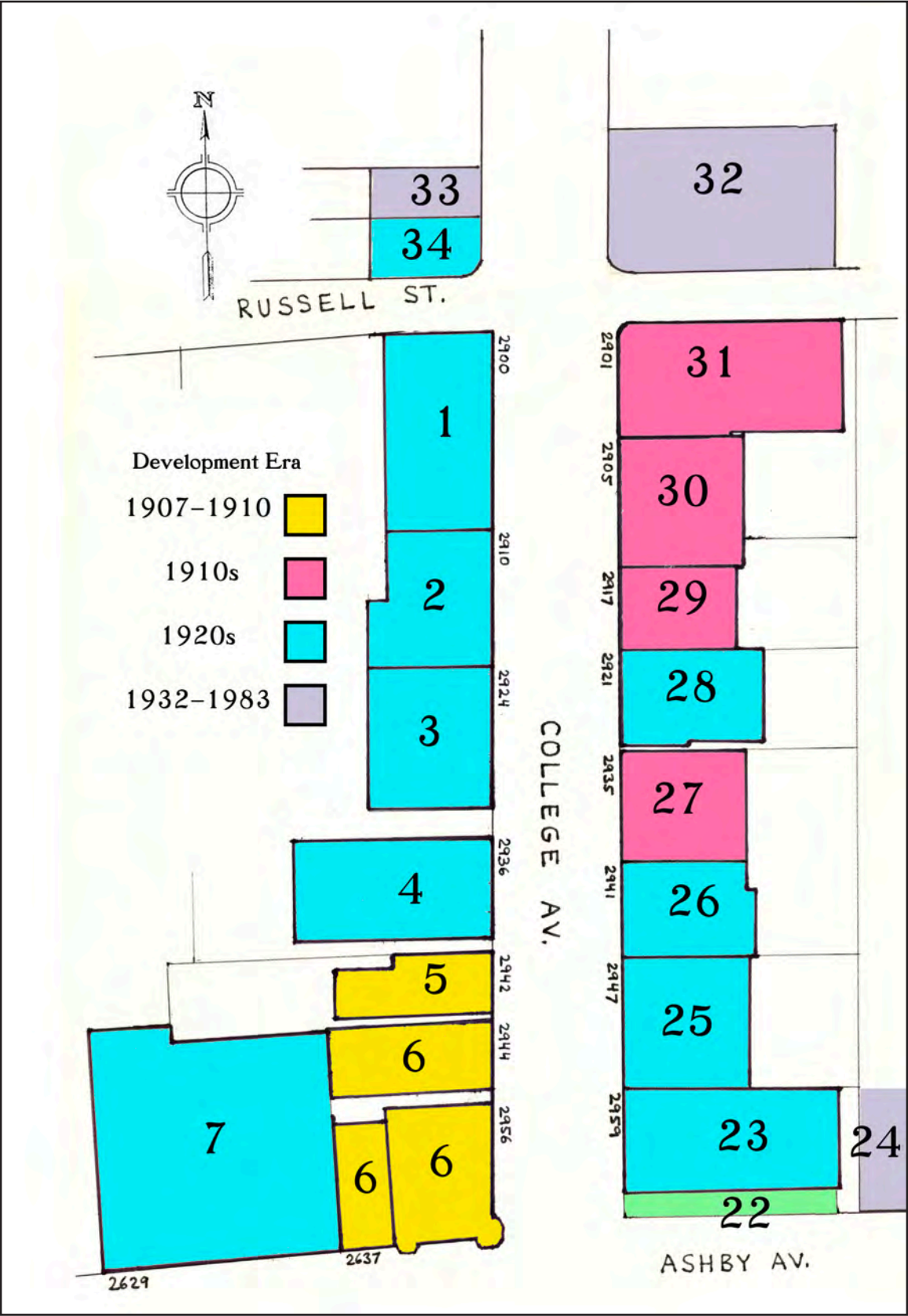


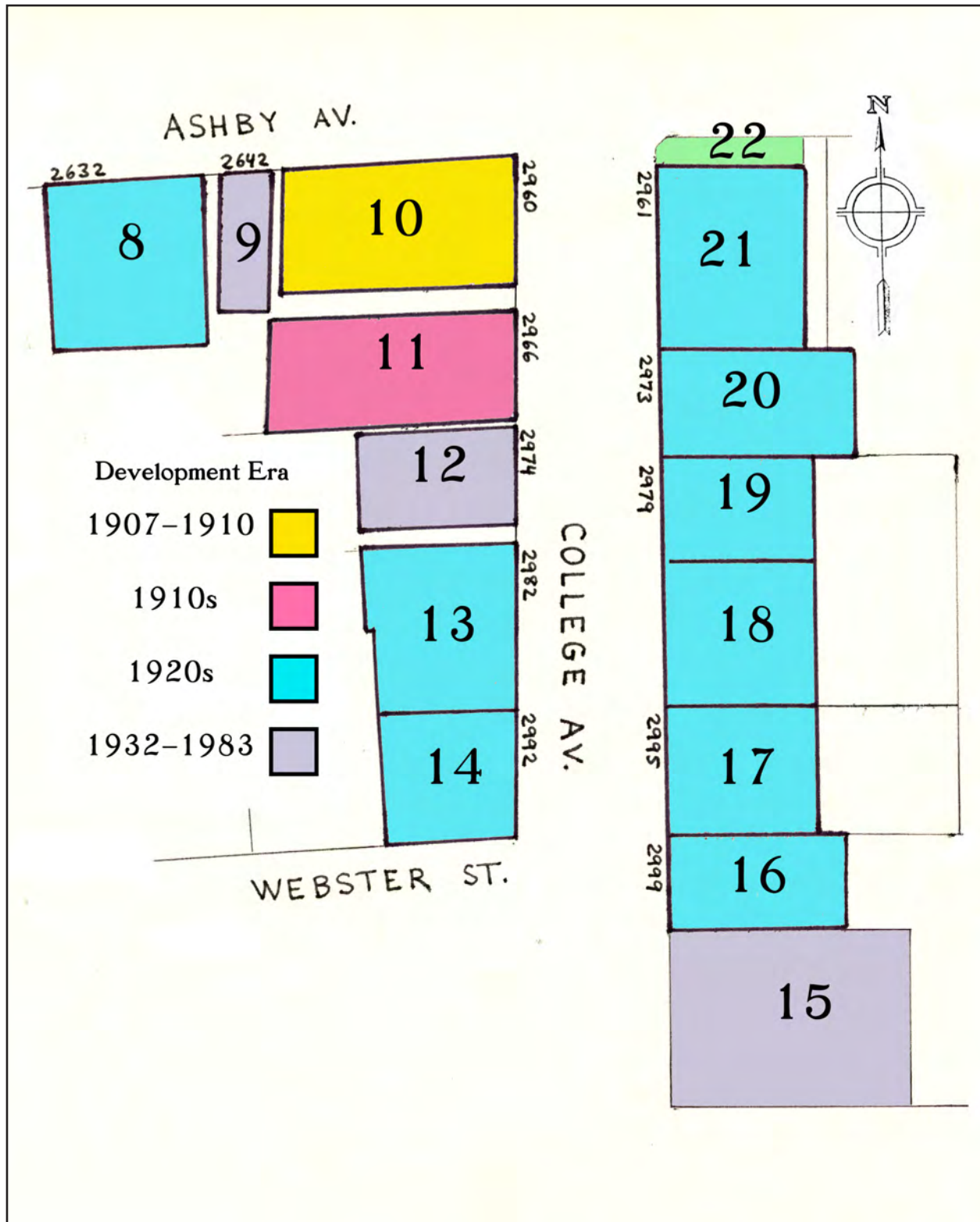
*East side of College north of Webster Street.
Anthony Bruce, 2025.*

*West side of College seen from Webster Street.
Byron Bolfig, 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.*



The No. 6 streetcar at College and Ashby, looking south, in 1946. Addison Laflin photo.







Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 1
Bischoff Building
2900 College Avenue



The Bischoff Building, 2900 College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Address:** 2900, 2904, 2908 College Avenue
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 052-1568-00400
(Berry-Bangs Tract, Block K, eastern portion of Lots 1 and 2)
Dimensions: 65 feet x 104.95 feet
Cross Streets: Ashby Avenue and Russell Street
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 11932
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
 - a. **Building(s):** Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
 - b. **Landscape or Open Space:** No
 - c. **Historic Site:** No
 - d. **District:** Yes
 - e. **Other:** Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Bischoff Building; Ozzie's
Commonly Known Name: unknown
6. **Date of Construction:** 1921 **Factual:** Yes
Source of Information: City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 10631, 27 September, 1921
7. **Architect:** John A. Bischoff (designer)
8. **Builder:** John A. Bischoff
9. **Style:** Continental
10. **Original Owners:** John A. Bischoff, 2717 Russell Street
Original Use: commercial and residential (4 stores; 4 apartments)
11. **Present Owner:** 2900 College Associates LLC [8 condominiums]
Present Occupant: Baker & Commons/Ozzie's Soda Fountain; Mrs. Dalloway's Literary & Garden Arts; Shangri-la Treasures
12. **Present Use:** commercial and residential (3 stores; 4 apartments)
Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** C-E
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Excellent **Interior:** unknown **Grounds:** Ø
Has the property's exterior been altered? Minimally

14. DESCRIPTION.

Built in 1921, this is a two-story frame building with cement plaster exterior. The ground floor consists of nine bays (five on College and four on Russell) which are separated by brown brick pilasters topped by blue-green tile “capitals.” The three southerly bays on College contain shopfronts with recessed entries. The others contain plate glass display windows, except for the far bays on Russell which are filled in with cement plaster. Each bay has one large transom window in the form of a low arch, divided into smaller panes in a “Prairie Style” pattern. The bulkheads beneath the display windows in each bay are faced with small brown tiles with a band of polychrome mosaic tiles at the top. Tiles play an important part in the decoration of the buildings in the district, both in finishing off the bulkheads and as overall surface treatment. A rounded corner entry leads to the corner business; the entrance was modernized with aluminum doors in 1960. The interior, now a cafe, is

paneled in remnants of the oak paneling that was the defining feature of the corner pharmacy since the building opened. The counter and attached stools from the drugstore soda fountain remain and are in use.

The second story was designed with four apartments with windows in the form of French doors opening onto purely ornamental iron-work balconies. The building is topped by a cornice, and, above that, a parapet disguised by a tile roof. A one-story section runs the length of the rear of the building. The westernmost of the two cement-plastered bays on Russell features a balustraded porch above the transom. This porch serves as entrance to the apartments. It is covered by a canopy. Two stairways lead to the porch, which runs the length of the building. The stairway that is visible from the street is balustraded, while the two stairways that are set further back are plain.

15. HISTORY.

The design of the Bischoff Building is unique; there are no other buildings quite like it in Berkeley. It exudes a certain European elegance with the French doors and wrought-iron balconies on the second floor. The first floor reflects more of the Arts and Crafts aesthetic of the 1920s with the exquisite and artistic tile bulkheads and the broad arched windows filled with geometric patterns created by the spacing of the muntins. A red tile roof finishes the composition and gives the building a sense of stability and permanence. The Bischoff Building is more than able to hold its own as the northern anchor of the block.

John Albert Bischoff was a perceptive and successful designer-builder, and a shrewd investor. He purchased Lots 1 through 6 in Block K of the Berry-Bangs Tract in 1921, which were all of the as-yet-unbuilt-upon lots on the west side

of College between Russell and Ashby. By the end of 1922, he had built four buildings—all different but related in design—that are an important contributor to the architectural aesthetic of the Elmwood commercial district.

John Bischoff was born in 1885 in San Francisco. He was already a contractor when he married Elna Irene Nelson of Berkeley. They moved often between addresses in Oakland and Berkeley until 1919 when Bischoff built a residence for his family at 2717 Russell Street at the corner of Cherry Street, one short block from College Avenue. The Bischoffs raised their three sons here and remained in the house the rest of their lives. Their son Elmer became a renowned figural painter and art instructor at the University.

They had not lived in the house long, before Bischoff began to reshape the neighborhood. In

early 1923, upon his purchase of the \$135,000 Granada Apartments on Alice Street, the *Oakland Tribune* wrote this about him, “Bischoff for a number of years has been active in Claremont and the College Avenue district. He recently completed the construction of 16 stores on [College] and within the past year has built four apartment houses in this section. His other building operations in this district brings his total in this section to close to \$500,000.”

Bischoff’s first project in the district was the Bischoff apartment building at 2840 College, on the northwest corner of College and Russell. On the large property that Bischoff had purchased in 1921 in the block to the south, he first built two side-by-side apartment houses facing Russell, west of College (The two apartment buildings were torn down in 1977 for construction of the City-owned parking lot that was built behind the commercial buildings.) The two Russell Street buildings had been begun in February, and, in September, construction was started on the corner building. Bischoff knew to anchor a corner with a two-story building, matching the height to that of the existing Kober Building at the far corner of the block.

The Bischoff Building was built with space for five shops, all facing College Avenue. The first tenant in the corner space at 2900 College was the Elmwood Pharmacy (combining two shopfronts), but it was not the long-running business owned by the Beretta family. The first druggists were Minor C. Kinnicutt and Gustave H. Springman, brothers-in-law (Minor had married Gustave’s sister Sylvia in 1919). During their first years in business the Kinnicutts lived in one of the apartments above the pharmacy, and Gustave Springman lived at 2741 College. The pharmacy was superbly outfitted with oak paneling, counters, and cupboards (with sliding glass doors). What is not known is whether a soda fountain was part of the original layout, although it existed by 1929.

In 1933, Minor Kinnicutt took over an exist-

ing pharmacy at 2499 Shattuck, and Frederick Paul Beretta became the new owner. It may be that during the Beretta proprietorship the very large moose head (and at least one other animal head) was added to the pharmacy’s decor, much to the delight of neighborhood children.

Fred Beretta (1893–1977) grew up in St. Helena, where his Swiss-born parents ran a dairy farm. As a teenager, he worked in a drugstore and that set him on his life’s course. He married Mathilda Kraft, also of St. Helena, in 1914. They settled first at 2124 Kittredge Street and Fred worked continuously as a pharmacist before acquiring his own pharmacy. Later, their son Leslie (1916–2018) joined them at the Elmwood Pharmacy, eventually taking over the family business in 1960. His wife Lieschen and daughter Donna also joined in running the business.

In 1981 the pharmacy was the center of a neighborhood battle to “save the Elmwood” from skyrocketing rents. Rising rents were affecting many of the merchants, but a group of investors were on the cusp of buying the Bischoff Building and their plan was to raise rents by 600%, effectively putting the pharmacy, the soda fountain, and the other shops out of business. Save the Elmwood, with encouragement of fountain owner “Ozzie” Osborne, set up a card table on the sidewalk daily for the next year. Through the group’s efforts, Measure I was placed on the June 1982 ballot. It passed, giving Berkeley the first commercial rent control ordinance in the country. It was a short-term victory, as the State legislature banned such ordinances in 1987.

After the successful outcome, however, the Berettas retired and the pharmacy was sold to Charles Carter of Carter’s College Avenue Pharmacy and it became Carter’s Elmwood Pharmacy. After his death in 1986, his daughter Vicky (not a pharmacist) ran the place, first as a pharmacy and then as Elmwood Health & Mercantile. All the while, the soda fountain/lunch

counter continued as a memorable institution.

The fountain, long known as “Ozzie’s,” was a concession within the pharmacy when it was purchased by Charles Osborne in 1950. After World War II he had become co-owner of a drive-in in Richmond, but could not resist the soda fountain when it became available. He was the perfect fit. He presided not only over the lunch counter, but the conversations of the customers, which often became a group discussion. He was remembered by customer Derk Richardson in a *San Francisco Chronicle* memorial article as “. . . a mentor to many people. Ozzie was the ringmaster. He had an opinion about everything and listened to everybody’s opinion.”

After the drugstore closed, the counter was saved and a cafe was built around it. Oak paneling from the drugstore was used in the new Elmwood Cafe, which opened in March 2010. The resurrection was the idea of Michael Pearce, who announced that half of each month’s profits would be donated to charity. The new cafe was a success, but after a waitress made assumptions about a customer in 2015, the incident made the news. Three years later, the resurrection of the negative publicity caused the restaurant to abruptly close. It was quickly reborn as Baker & Commons by its new owner Kara Hammond and continues to thrive.

Moving along southward from the double-store pharmacy, there were originally three single shop spaces in 1921. The first business to open next to the pharmacy was Henry Knoth’s Ivy Shoppe, which would become a popular dry-goods store, later moving to the other side of the street, and finally closing in 1986. Mr. Knoth lived in the new Bischoff-built apartment building at 2840 College. An early description of the Ivy Shoppe from the *Oakland Post Enquirer* reads, “A shop of dainty gifts—novelties of every description that please the feminine mind—silk under vests—nighties and ribbon garters of every hue—and *baby things*—just heaps of

them, so dainty and fragile and lovable!” When Bischoff Shop Building #2 was completed, Mr. Knoth moved The Ivy Shoppe into expanded quarters in the new building at 2910 College. The story passed down through the years was that the shop was named for his daughter, but this was only a story as Henry Knoth did not wed until 1928, and by then the business was on to its fourth owner. Henry Knoth gave up The Ivy Shoppe in 1924 and became a waiter in a hotel and later a caterer.

Simultaneous with The Ivy Shoppe was Abbott & Schardt (furs, gowns, and tailoring) run by Mrs. Carol Abbott, next door at 2904 College. This luxury store was extremely short-lived, but set the stage for the Hughett Dress Shop. Claire Swanson was born in Minnesota in 1891. She married a Mr. Hughett about 1910, but by 1916 she was living alone in San Francisco as a dressmaker. After the war, she moved to Berkeley and opened the Hughett Hemstitching Parlor at 2706 Russell in the Dondero Building, specializing in house dresses. In 1922 she remarried: to David Gutman, a post office clerk. By 1924 they had moved out of the shop and were living coincidentally in a John Bischoff-designed house at 3148 Claremont Avenue.

In 1926, Mrs. Gutman moved to the Bischoff Building and opened the Hughett Dress Shop at 2904 College. Two years later the shop was expanded. The partition was removed between 2904 and 2906, concrete footings supported heavy posts, a steel beam supported the upper floor, and the new opening was finished off with a shallow arch. As part of the remodel, the especially high tile bulkheads were lowered, which explains why the colorful upper border is missing from them.

The refined women’s clothing store proved to be a success, staying in business until 1967, and outliving Mr. Gutman, who died in 1958. The store made the couple wealthy. They bought a large house on Rockwell in Oakland in the late

1930s and were able to support a live-in gardener and a live-in cook. Later came vacations in Honolulu, traveling on the *Lurline*. Mrs. Gutman is remembered for her fastidiousness; early each morning she could be seen carefully sweeping the expanse of sidewalk in front of the store in preparation for the day's clientele.

Margo Ellen Roberts, interior decorator, was the next tenant in the Hughett Dress Shop space. She was there by 1968, having moved from her original location at 2926 College. She worked as an interior decorator in Berkeley for fifty years. Margo Roberts also carried items for sale. As Miss Roberts wrote about her inventory, "A varied selection of antiques, silver, and fine furniture. All kinds of lovely things to make your home lovelier." Her new larger space functioned more as an antique store, and that is how it is remembered. With the threat of a rent increase in 1981, Margo Roberts moved her shop to Solano Avenue.

According to the *Berkeley Gazette* in December 1983, "Avenue Books moved the day before Thanksgiving into the long-empty storefront at 2904 College next to Ozzie's soda shrine." The new bookstore, founded by Marilyn Capitelli, was a bit of a revelation. It was spacious, well-lit with windows front and back, open in the evening, and carried all the current hard-cover books. That there was already a bookstore, just three doors away seems to have been forgotten. Avenue Books lasted twenty years, closing in 2004; its second owner being Brian Rood.

Almost immediately, a new bookstore appeared: Mrs. Dalloway's Literary & Garden Arts. Founded by Elmwood residents and friends-since-college, Marion Abbott and Ann Leyhe, the shop featured a large section of gardening books, reflecting one of Ann's interests (she had been director for fifteen years of the Park Day School *Secret Gardens Tour*). The store's name was inspired by the first line of Virginia Woolf's 1925 novel, *Mrs. Dalloway*: "Mrs. Dalloway said she would buy the flow-

ers herself." In 2010, when the Elmwood Cafe was carved out of part of the former pharmacy, Mrs. Dalloway's acquired the other part as an expanded children's section. There is a friendly transparency between the two businesses as windows set above the bookshelves let light in through the cafe. In 2021, Ann and Marion retired, but not before handpicking new owners for the store. Eric and Jessica Green seamlessly took over the business and are there today.

The shop at the end, 2908 College, began as a hat shop. Mrs. Hildur Lindstrom Coon opened the Hildur L. Coon Hat Shoppe in 1922, advertising "smart hats, imports, and designer hats." Mrs. Coon was married to a naval engineer; they lived in North Berkeley. The next year she moved her shop to 2991 College, becoming a first tenant in the new Morris Building. Her old space was then rented to Ada A. Collins (Mrs. James Alfred Collins) who opened the Collins Hat Shop. She continued with her shop after her husband died in 1927, but by 1933 the shop had been turned over to Beatrice H. Feldman (Mrs. Israel Feldman) as the Beatrice Hat Shop. Mrs. Feldman remained the longest. Her shop was in business as late as 1955 and by then she had moved into the Bischoff apartment building to be nearby.

There is a gap until 1971 when a new kind of store opened at 2908 College: Caravansary. It was founded by two sisters, Hildy and Ortrun and their husbands, Khajag Sarkissian and Gerry Niesar. It offered coffee, tea, candies, pastries, and cookware, and, as stated in Mr. Sarkissian's obituary, the Caravansary helped "to define a new wave of cuisine and coffee culture in the Bay Area." At one point there were Caravansary shops in San Francisco and Palo Alto as well. Mr. Sarkissian and chef Setrak Iniaian created the Aram sandwich during the Caravansary years. In 1982 it moved into the space vacated by Carter's College Avenue Pharmacy, and then vanished from College Avenue before the end of that decade.

In 1988, a new tenant moved into 2908 College. Before opening their latest branch shop, the popular photo-finishing business Presto Prints first hired architect Thomas Lavin to demolish the original shopfront and remodel the space at a cost of \$30,000. Gone were the mosaic tile bulkheads and the copper Kawneer window

framing, all replaced with aluminum and glass. This unfortunate renovation destroyed the continuity of the shopfronts of this heretofore intact building. When Presto Prints left about ten years later, the shopfront was returned to an approximation of the original.

16. Significance

The Bischoff Building is significant as one of five buildings designed and built by John A. Bischoff that make up almost a quarter of the streetscape in the Elmwood commercial district. Bischoff was a master designer-builder who moved into the neighborhood and was able to actualize his vision for the commercial strip by buying lots and creating a cohesive group of buildings that help to define the Elmwood commercial district architecturally. This building is significant as the anchor building for the north end of the original two-block length of the district.

The Bischoff Building is significant for its unique design; there are no other buildings quite like it in Berkeley. It exudes a certain European elegance with the French doors and wrought-iron balconies on the second floor.

The first floor reflects more of the Arts and Crafts aesthetic of the 1920s with the exquisite and artistic tile bulkheads and the broad arched windows filled with geometric patterns. A red tile roof finishes the composition and gives the building a sense of stability and permanence.

The building is also significant for its association with so many of the iconic Elmwood businesses, such as the Elmwood Pharmacy, Ozzie's soda fountain, the Hughett Dress Shop, Margo Robert's Antiques, Avenue Books and Mrs. Dalloway's, the long history of hat shops, and the Caravansary.

The building is significant as the impetus for the first Commercial Rent Control ordinance in the country. Much of the discussion and the drive for signatures took place here.

Features to Preserve.

- the tile-roofed parapet
- the cornice
- the French doors on the second story
- the wrought-iron simulated balconies
- the beltcourse between first and second stories
- the transoms
- the brick piers with tile "capitals"
- the original tile bulkheads
- the shopfronts at 2904–2906 with their staggered bulkheads, bronze or copper window framing, wooden doors, detailed ceiling
- remaining awning crank mechanisms such as the one on the pier between 2900 and 2904
- the balustraded stairway at the rear
- terrace at the rear, the pergola, and balusters
- half-balusters that decorate the rear parapet

17. Historic Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

Architectural Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

18. Is the property endangered? No

19. Bibliography.

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20. Recorder

Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird, 2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

12 January 2026

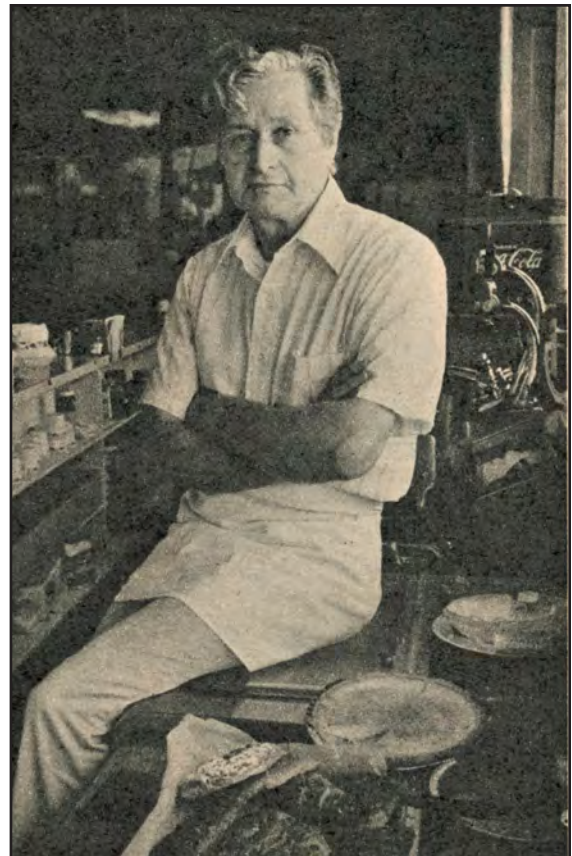
Additional Photographs.



Barbara Lubin at Ozzie's Soda Fountain. Jerry Telfer photo, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 1 October 1981.



Anthony Bruce bidding farewell to the pharmacy and the soda fountain. Alex Malloy photo, *Berkeley Voice*, 2 May 2008.



Charles "Ozzie" Osborne at the lunch counter. Fran Ortiz photo, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 25 March 1979.

Additional Photographs.



The Bischoff Building, view looking northwest. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



The Bischoff Building. Anthony Bruce, 2020.



The Bischoff Building, Russell Street frontage. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



The Bischoff Building, looking north. Anthony Bruce, 2020.



The Bischoff Building, shopfront at 2904. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

Additional Photographs.



Bischoff Building, grand stairway to apartment level on Russell Street. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Bischoff Building, shopfronts along College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Bischoff Building, showing entire building. Anthony Bruce, 1982.



Bischoff Building, showing entire building. Ormsby Donogh, 1939, Donogh Real Estate Files, BAHA.

Additional Photographs.

The Bischoff Building, a perfect backdrop to show off a vintage car. Anthony Bruce, 2022.



Bischoff Building, rear, viewed from Russell Street, showing grand balustraded stairway and two secondary stairs. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Bischoff Building, rear, viewed from parking lot. There are four arched entrances to apartments on the second floor. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

Additional Photographs.



Bischoff Building, rear, viewed from Russell Street, showing stairways. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Bischoff Building, rear, viewed from Russell Street, showing stairways. Anthony Bruce, 1982.



Bischoff Building, grand stairway on Russell Street. Ormsby Donogh, 1939, Donogh Real Estate File, BAH.

Additional Photographs.



Inside the Elmwood Pharmacy, 2900 College Avenue. Proprietor Fred P. Beretta and customer. Byron Bolfig, November 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.



Inside the Elmwood Pharmacy, 2900 College Avenue. Leslie Beretta at the prescription counter. Byron Bolfig, November 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.



Inside the Elmwood Pharmacy, 2900 College Avenue with Marlene Beretta Leverette and Lieschen Beretta and her husband, druggist Leslie Beretta. The Press, 11 May 1977.

Additional Photographs.



Mrs. Claire Hughett Gutman inside the Hughett Dress shop, 2904 College Ave. Byron Bolfig, November 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.



Mrs. Beatrice Feldman at the entrance to the Beatrice Hat Shop, 2908 College Avenue. Byron Bolfig, November 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.



Michael Pearce, who opened the Elmwood Cafe in 2010. Kristopher Skinner photo, Berkeley Voice, 2010

John A. Bischoff, who designed and built the building in 1921. Oakland Tribune, 12 December 1928.



Marion Abbott and Ann Leyhe who founded Mrs. Dalloway in 2004. Berkeley Bookmark, Spring 2010.



APPLICATION FOR BUILDING PERMIT FRAME BUILDING

Application is hereby made to the Department of Buildings and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for permission to build a 2 story 16 rms. 4 bath room frame Building

on the W side of College Ave cor Russell St. street.
Side 2650-2-4-6 Russell

Being Lot No. 2900-2-4-6 College Block College Tract

According to plans and Specifications herewith submitted. All provisions of the Building Law will be complied with in the erection of said building whether specified herein or not.

Estimated entire cost of Building \$ 15000.00 5 stories.

Building to be occupied as apt. 4 stories by (No.) 4 families

Size of Lot 100 by 64.54 feet.

Size of proposed building 100 ft. by 50 ft. Extreme height of building 26 ft.

Height in clear of cellar 7 ft. in. Height in clear of first story 12 ft. 6 in.

Height in clear of second story 9 ft. in. Height in clear of third story 12 ft. in.

Foundation to be of (material) CONCRETE (thickness) 12 inches, greatest height of foundation 24 inches.

Width of footings 12 inches.

Mud sills 2 X 6 Main sills 2 X 6 Girders X Pos.

on piers X If piers are used, give size by ft. on centers

Size of underpinning 2 X 6 inches 16 inches O. C. Size of studs in first story 2 X 4 inches 16 inches O. C.

Size of studs in second story 2 X 4 inches 16 inches O. C. Size of studs in third story X inches X inches O. C.

Exterior wall covering to be of PLASTER Light shaft wall covering to be of PLASTER

All outside walls covered with singles or plaster will be close boarded.

First floor joists Cariceto inches 16 inches on centers Longest span between supports 20 ft.

Second floor joists 2 X 10 inches 16 inches on centers Longest span between supports 20 ft.

Third floor joists X inches 16 inches on centers Longest span between supports 20 ft.

Ceiling joists 2 X 4 inches 16 inches on centers Longest span between supports 9 ft.

Rafters 2 X 4 inches 24 inches on centers Longest span between supports 9 ft.

Roof covered with TERRAZZO steep or flat? 1/4 Pitch

Studs in bearing partitions will be same as outside walls of each story.

Chimneys of TERRAZZO lined with any patent flues? yes

Gas grate flues to be patent chimney or brick?

Any dumb waiters or chutes? Any elevator (freight or passenger)?

Cave brackets will be solid.

Name of Owner of Ground John A. Brichoff Residence Address 2717 RUSSELL ST.

Name of Owner of Building " Residence Address "

Name of Lessee of Building " Residence Address "

Name of Architect or Designer John A. Brichoff Residence Address 2717 RUSSELL ST.

Name of Builder " Residence Address "

I hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

2650-2-4-6 Russell -
2900-2-4-6 College -

John A. Brichoff
Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder.
Address 2717 RUSSELL ST.

This Permit expires one year from date unless sooner revoked by the City Council.

Date SEP 27 1921

V

Permit No. 10631

BERKELEY PRINT



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 2

Bischoff Shops Building No. 2
2910 College Avenue



The Bischoff Shops Building No. 2, 2910 College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Address:** 2910, 2912, 2914, 2918 College Avenue
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 052-1568-00500
(Berry-Bangs Tract, Block K, Lot 3)
Dimensions: 75 feet x 148.5 feet
Cross Streets: Ashby Avenue and Russell Street
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 11933
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
 - a. **Building(s):** Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
 - b. **Landscape or Open Space:** No
 - c. **Historic Site:** No
 - d. **District:** Yes
 - e. **Other:** Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Bischoff Shops Building No. 2
Commonly Known Name: not known
6. **Date of Construction:** 1922 **Factual:** Yes
Source of Information: City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 12461, 25 August 1922
7. **Architect:** John A. Bischoff (designer)
8. **Builder:** John A. Bischoff
9. **Style:** Storefront
10. **Original Owners:** John A. Bischoff, 2717 Russell Street
Original Use: commercial (2 stores)
11. **Present Owner:** Triantopoulos Christos Tr & Hamerler Hans J & etal
Present Occupant: 5 Tacos Beers (2914 College); The 14 Karats (2910 College)
12. **Present Use:** commercial (1 restaurant; 1 store)
Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** C-E
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Excellent **Interior:** unknown **Grounds:** Ø
Has the property's exterior been altered? yes

14. Description

A one-story frame building with cement plaster exterior, originally housing four shops. The three shops to the south were combined into one space in 1966; that space is currently used as a restaurant.

Most of these modest shopfront buildings utilized different decorative features to set them apart. This building was individualized with a tile roof overhang and pilasters with composite (Corinthian/Ionic) capitals framing the four

bays. Transoms remain, but shopfronts have been changed over the years: the restaurant currently with sliding windows above black tile bulkheads. The restaurant entrance is configured as a traditional shopfront. The transoms of the north shopfront are hidden behind a large fixed-in-place awning, and the shopfront shows the remains of an earlier streamlined Moderne remodel.

15. History

After completing his first commercial building on College Avenue (#2900), John Bischoff built three more throughout 1922. This building was begun in August 1922, making it the second shop building of the three.

One of the first tenants was a Bischoff “loyalist,” Henry Knoth. He opened his notions shop—The Ivy Shoppe—in the corner Bischoff-built building and he lived in the new Bischoff-built apartment building at 2840 College. When Bischoff Shop Building #2 was completed, Mr. Knoth moved The Ivy Shoppe into expanded quarters in the new building, at 2910 College, thence referring to it as a dry goods store. The story passed down through the years was that the shop was named for his daughter, but this was only a story as Henry Knoth did not wed until 1928, and by then the business was on to its fourth owner. Henry Knoth gave up The Ivy Shoppe in 1924 and became a waiter in a hotel and later a caterer. Maurice Rubenstein & Son owned The Ivy Shoppe in 1925, and Joseph Sirbu in 1927 before the business was purchased by Antonio N. Ferroggiaro in 1928. The Ferroggiaros lived nearby on Garber Street. It was under his ownership that the Ivy Shoppe opened in greatly expanded quarters in the Curry Building across the street in 1937.

The other inaugural business was the Elmwood Art Studio, later called Ivanoff’s Art Studio, and

finally just Ivanoff’s. This gift and home-furnishing shop began in a double shopfront (2916 and 2920 College) and began a tradition of this space making use of two shops.

Nicholas Sergius Ivanoff was born in Russia in 1890 and came to San Francisco in 1915. He married in 1921 and he and his wife Sonia opened their art and furniture shop in 1922. They moved into a house nearby at 2811 College Avenue. The Ivanoffs advertised often and the shop was the place to go for gifts on College Avenue for generations. From December 1925:

Our hearts cannot but rejoice in true holiday fashion when we visit the Elmwood Studio, 2916 College Ave. A fairly dazzling selection of most unusual things of use and ornament that will solve the gift question very shortly.

And from 1928:

You will be surprised at Ivanoff’s Art Studio, 2916-20 College Ave., Berkeley. The largest in Bay Cites—Selection of exquisite European Object d’Art at most moderate prices.

Ivanoff’s moved to 2936 College in 1937 and remained in business until after Mrs. Ivanoff’s death in 1955. Nicholas Ivanoff died in 1966.

Meanwhile, another gift shop had moved into half of Ivanoff’s by 1940: The Oriental Gift

Shop run by Mrs. Ethel R. Pryor. She had first opened her shop in about 1937 at 2993 College (Elmwood merchants moved around). Ethel Rewalt was born in Colorado in 1887. By 1930, when she moved to Berkeley, she had been widowed twice. She supported herself as a dressmaker in her own shop at 3203 College until she opened her gift shop. Besides Oriental art, her shop also carried modern glazed pottery. After a two-month sojourn in Europe in 1949, Mrs. Pryor closed her business in 1950. She died in 1979.

The business that opened in the other half of Ivanoff's about the same time was Beverley White's millinery shop. It lasted about as long as the Oriental Gift Shop, and then both spaces were once again combined into one for Alan Percy Gifts & Antiques, which opened in 1950 or '51, and became another legendary Elmwood gift shop. Mr. and Mrs. Percy were English and were both especially genial, as though they were welcoming customers into their home. The antique shop was in the southernmost shop and it opened into the next space. At the back was a room no bigger than a large closet and at one end was a shelf with small toys, mostly painted wooden toys from Europe and Japan. So, for the neighborhood children who knew about the toy closet, Alan Percy's also counted as a toy store.

The Percys also had an antique store on Union Street in San Francisco, and they decided to concentrate on that store. In 1963 Vera and Alan Percy sold the inventory and fixtures of the College Avenue store to Nan Curtis Laughlin, who had worked with them in the store. Nan had grown up in Berkeley in a Julia Morgan-designed house on Etna Street. The house stayed in the family, while Nan and her husband Chandler Curtis lived in a large brown-shingle house next door. Under Nan's leadership, the store expanded into a third space in 1966 and featured women's clothing (some of which were her own line) as well as gifts. The toy inventory was also expanded. Nan was energetic

and stylish in a casual modern way. The store, with her distinctive logo prominent on a large cadet blue sign, was a big success. But in the fall of 1971, the store was closed, the houses on Etna were sold, and the Laughlins retired to the Hawaiian Islands, where her mother had grown up. Nan Laughlin died in 1999.

Now that this space had been expanded from two shopfronts to three, there was no turning back: it remains so today. But the use of the space has changed. After fifty years of gift shops, the space was converted to restaurant use in 1972. Cafe Romano, serving "pizza, pasta, Hofbrau-style sandwiches, and hamburgers," received a use permit in April 1972 and opened by the fall. With its large awning extending to the tile-roof top of the parapet—and that of the next door Valeska Beauty Salon almost as high—the architecture of the building was completely hidden from view.

Cafe Romano, even though a popular spot in the Elmwood, closed in 1988 and was replaced by India Pavilion. This restaurant remained until 1997 when several months worth of remodeling began in August. In early 1998, Shen Hua, featuring Northern Chinese cuisine and Southern style dim sum, opened and survived the first years of the Covid pandemic. In 2023 Shen Hua was replaced by the current 5 Tacos & Beer.

A variety of shops occupied the northern two spaces over the years. In the late 1940s the Elmwood Florist flourished at 2912, run by Mr. and Mrs. Bowles. The Florist closed in 1948 and Millward's Market from 2901 College remodeled the front and moved in. The store was vacant in 1955.

In 1937, Mrs. Bess Riner remodeled the front of 2910 College to move the entrance to the side, and at the same time added Streamline Moderne decorative touches which still exist. Mrs. Riner had opened her beauty shop first at 2923 College, across the street, in 1926. In 1945 Bess Riner died and her shop was taken

over by Paul David Ingraham in 1946, changing the name from Bess Riner's Beauty Parlor to Valeska Beauty Salon. Paul had been a cosmetician in Palo Alto before the war. In 1943, he enlisted in the Navy and married Eleanor June Sanderson while on furlough. He was released from duty in late 1945. Paul and June (who had attended beauty school) moved to Berkeley and lived nearby in a Leola Hall-designed house at 3028 College. Paul died in 1980, and June may

have kept the business going until she remarried. In March 1982, John Moriarty received a use permit for a jewelry store at 2910 College. After extensive remodeling, The 14 Karats opened later that year. The grand opening of the shop's gallery was in September with a show that included work by Salvador Dali and M. C. Escher. The business is still thriving forty-three years later, along with its intriguing window displays.

16. Significance

The Bischoff Shop Building No. 2 is significant as one of five buildings designed and built by John A. Bischoff that make up almost a quarter of the streetscape in the Elmwood commercial district. Bischoff was a master designer-builder who moved into the neighborhood and was able to actualize his vision for the commercial strip by buying lots and creating a cohesive group of buildings that help to define the Elmwood commercial district architecturally. This building gives the impression of a shop building that could have stood in Pompeii, with Classical de-

tails. It would have conveyed this even more with the originally deeply inset entries and the tile-roofed parapet (tiles have been removed!).

The building is also significant for its association with so many of the iconic Elmwood businesses, such as The Ivy Shoppe, Ivanoff's, Alan Percy Antiques & Gifts, Nan Laughlin Gifts & Casuals, both the Bess Riner and Valeska beauty salons, The 14 Karats, and the long-running Cafe Romano.

Features to Preserve.

- the egg-and-dart and dentil frieze
- the transoms
- the pilasters with their Classical capitals
- the simulated stone façade
- the 1937 streamlined entry at 2910

17. Historic Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

Architectural Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

18. Is the property endangered? No

19. Bibliography

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 12461, 25 August 1922; as well as several other applications for alterations.

Block books and Sanborn maps

Directories.

Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.

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“Wedding to Be October Event,” *Oakland Tribune*, 8 October 1910.

“Engaged to Wed John A. Bischoff,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 13 October 1910.

“Big Apartment Sale in Lake District Made,” *Oakland Tribune*, 7 January 1923.

John Bischoff obituary, *Oakland Tribune*, 9 May 1964.

“Recollections of John A. Bischoff, Jr.” by Andrea Gabriel, *Rockridge News*, April 1987.

advertisements for Ivanoff’s, *Oakland Post Enquirer*, 16 December 1925, 31 March 1926.

Sonia Ivanoff death notice, *Oakland Tribune*, 5 October 1955.

intended sale of Alan Percy Gifts, *Berkeley Gazette*, 1 June 1963.

Mrs. Bess Riner obituary, *Oakland Tribune*, 5 September 1945.

Paul Ingraham, Sr., obituary, *Berkeley Gazette*, 28 February 1980.

“The 14 Karats Gallery,” *Berkeley Gazette*, 24 September 1982.

20. Recorder

Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird,
2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

7 December 2025

Additional Photographs.



*A composite capital on the Bischoff Shop Building No. 2.
Anthony Bruce, 2025.*

*Looking north along the façade of the Bischoff Shop
Building, No. 2. Anthony Bruce, 2025.*

*The Bischoff Shop Building, No. 2.
Anthony Bruce, 1982.*



Additional Photographs.



Bsichoff Shops Building No. 2, Mr. and Mrs. Bowles and the interior of Elmwood Flowers, 2912 College Avenue. Byron Bolfig, November 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.

Bsichoff Shops Building No. 2, Byron Bolfig holding flash bulbs at Elmwood Flowers, 2912 College Avenue. November 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.



Paul Ingraham in the Valeska Beauty Salon. Byron Bolfig, November 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.



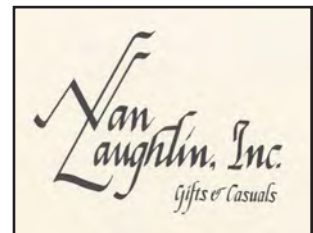
Display ad for Cafe Romano in the June 1973 telephone directory (its first listing).



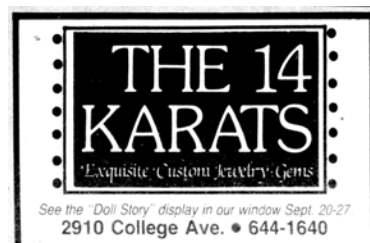
Sonia Ivanoff. Oakland Tribune, 6 February 1929.



Ivanoff's seal on merchandise. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Nan Laughlin logo, Christmas catalog, 1969.



The 14 Karats ad. Berkeley Gazette, 20 September 1982.

WRITEN IN INK

APPLICATION FOR BUILDING PERMIT FRAME BUILDING

Application is hereby made to the Department of Buildings and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for permission to build a 1 story 4 room frame Store on the corner of College street 100 feet So of Cumuel street, Being Lot No. _____ Block _____ Tract _____

According to plans and specifications herewith submitted. All provisions of the Building Law will be complied with in the erection of said building whether specified herein or not.

Estimated entire cost of building \$ 6500

Building to be occupied as Store by (No.) _____ families

Size of lot 76 by 148 1/2 feet.

Size of proposed building 75 ft. by 60 ft. Extreme height of building 18 ft.

Height in clear of cellar _____ ft. _____ in. Height in clear of first story 14 ft. _____ in.

Height in clear of second story _____ ft. _____ in. Height in clear of third story _____ ft. _____ in.

Foundation to be of (material) Concrete (Thickness) 12 inches, greatest height of foundation 24 inches.

Width of footings 18 inches.

Mud sills 2 x 6 Main sills 4 x 6 Girders _____ X _____ Post on piers _____ X If piers are used give size _____ by _____ ft. on centers.

Size of underpinning _____ X _____ inches _____ inches O. C. Size of studs in first story 2 x 6 inches 16 inches O. C.

Size of studs in second story _____ X _____ inches _____ inches O. C. Size of studs in third story _____ X _____ inches O. C.

Exterior wall coverings to be of Plaster Light shaft wall coverings to be of _____

All outside walls covered with shingles or plaster will be close boarded.

First floor joists _____ X _____ inches _____ inches on centers. Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Second floor joists _____ X _____ inches _____ inches on centers. Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Third floor joists _____ X _____ inches _____ inches on centers. Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Ceiling joists _____ X _____ inches _____ inches on centers. Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Rafters 12 x 6 inches _____ inches n centers. Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Roof covered with tar & gravel Steep or flat? flat Pitch _____

Studs in bearing partitions will be same as outside walls of each story.

Chimneys of Brick lined with terra cotta any patent flues? _____

Gas grate flues to be patent chimney or brick? _____

Any dumb waiters or chutes? _____ Any elevator (freight or passenger)? _____

Cove brackets will be solid.

Name of Owner of Ground John Residence Address _____

Name of Owner of Building _____ Residence Address _____

Name of Lessee of Building _____ Residence Address _____

Name of Architect or Designer _____ Residence Address _____

Name of Builder _____ Residence Address _____

I hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against the City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

2912-14-16-20. College Ave. John G. Bischoff
Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder.

Address 2717 Cumuel St. Berkeley

This Permit expires one year from date unless sooner revoked by the City Council.

Date AUG 25 1922 Permit No. 12461

Gillick Print.

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 12461, 25 August 1922



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 3

Bischoff Shops Building No. 3
2924 College Avenue



The Bischoff Shops Building No. 3, 2924 College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Address:** 2924, 2926, 2928, 2930 College Avenue
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 052-1568-00600
(Berry-Bangs Tract, Block K, Lots 4 & 5)
Dimensions: 75 feet x 148.5 feet
Cross Streets: Ashby Avenue and Russell Street
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 11934
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
 - a. **Building(s):** Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
 - b. **Landscape or Open Space:** No
 - c. **Historic Site:** No
 - d. **District:** Yes
 - e. **Other:** Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Bischoff Shops Building No. 3
Commonly Known Name: not known
6. **Date of Construction:** 1922 **Factual:** Yes
Source of Information: City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 12822, 14 October, 1922
7. **Architect:** John A. Bischoff (designer)
8. **Builder:** John A. Bischoff
9. **Style:** Storefront
10. **Original Owners:** John A. Bischoff, 2717 Russell Street
Original Use: commercial (4 stores)
11. **Present Owner:** Gordon John K & Mitchell Janis L Trs & Gordon et al
Present Occupant: In the Wood; Personal Pizazz; Scents by the Bay; Studio Sessions
12. **Present Use:** commercial (4 stores)

Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** C-E
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Excellent **Interior:** unknown **Grounds:** Ø
Has the property's exterior been altered? some storefronts altered

14. Description.

Built in 1922, this is a one-story frame building with cement plaster exterior, which, above each shopfront, is marked in squares in imitation of stonework. The façade is divided into four shopfront bays by tall piers with recessed panels (five piers in all). The piers extend slightly above the roof line and are each topped by an ornamental cast concrete urn.

2924 and 2928 retain original entries with display windows and decorative transoms. The

restaurant front has been remodeled several times since 1970, but now is closer to the original except for wood-frame casement windows instead of the traditional plate glass display windows. 2926 once had a striking late 1940s or early 1950s remodeled “Modern” shopfront; it has been redesigned to match the other original entries. The south wall of the building is visible along the pedestrian passage and there is a side door leading to the restaurant.

15. History.

This building, with its distinctive urns atop, was the last one built by John Bischoff on his extensive piece of property. In total, he built six structures on this block: three solely commercial buildings facing College, a two-story building at College and Russell with shops facing College and apartments reached from Russell, and two apartment buildings to the west on Russell. (The two apartment buildings were torn down in 1977 for construction of the City-owned parking lot that was built behind the commercial buildings.)

When Bischoff Shop Building No. 3 was completed in 1923, tenants were ready and waiting. During 1922, Bischoff had placed newspaper advertisements which read, “Stores for rent. Ideal location for first-class stores, in fast-growing limited business district of Berkeley.”

The first tenants included the Eagle Candy Store run by Joseph Perry and Gaspar Sena at 2924 College. Perry lived at 2305 Ward Street. The short-lived candy shop was gone by 1926.

Next to the candy shop was the Elmwood Music Shoppe & Circulating Library, run by Mrs. Irene Evans and Madge Robinson, a librarian, who also lived at 2305 Ward. It started out well. In December 1924 the shop ran a joint Victor-sponsored advertisement with the Tupper & Reed music store downtown. Both shops carried genuine Victrolas and received new Victor

records every Friday. But sometime in 1925 the Elmwood Music Shoppe was gone.

By 1924, the Elmwood Plumbing & Gas Heating Supply had opened at 2928 College, owned by William E. Onions of 2612 Haste Street, where he and his wife lived with their large family. But, as with the music shop, Mr. Onions closed his shop in 1925.

Of the first four inaugural tenants, only the business at 2930 College—the Wil-Mar Bakery—remained, and it paved the way for other bakeries and restaurants to follow. It was opened by William and Marion Battenhouse (hence the name “Wil-Mar”) in 1924. The next year, Mr. Straus, the building owner, added a brick oven behind the shop, which proved an enticement to future food service businesses.

Meanwhile, the Old English Bakery at 2986 College had opened about 1932 under the charge of Mrs. Mary Sandelands Hawkins, offering “home-made specialties including meat pies, breads, and pastries.” Born in 1883 in England, she lived on Emerson Street with her husband James Herbert, a contractor, and *their* large family. Nels Larsen, the next owner of Mrs. Hawkins’ bakery, sold it to Michael Lipary in early 1944, who reopened it at the original location. But by December of that year, it was announced that the Old English Food Shop (bakery and delicatessen) had opened

in the shop vacated by the Wil-Mar Bakery, with this wartime pronouncement, “When better cakes and pies are made, Old English will make them.” But the proprietor barely had time to make good on the promise, as Old English was replaced by the Chatterton Bakery in about 1947. The Chatterton was a small local chain of two or three shops, starting in Oakland in the 1920s. By 1924 there was a Chatterton on Bancroft near Telegraph, which coexisted with the College Avenue Chatterton. In August 1955, the bakery was sold to Robert and Clarence Parker. Parker’s Bakery was a favorite for schoolchildren who could buy small, inexpensive cookies with a dollop of chocolate in the center.

The long line of bakeries came to an end in late 1970 when the store was remodeled into a restaurant. La Boheme *hofbrau* opened in early 1971. It was an informal place serving large sandwiches at lunchtime; it soon had quite a following. By 1980 it had been replaced by Petroushka, featuring French and Russian cuisine. The formal Elmwood Grill existed in the location for a short time in 1997–98. It was followed by Filippo’s Pastaria. In the Wood is currently in the space.

There seem to have been always circulating libraries set up in various shops in the early days, but the first genuine bookstore was likely the Berkeley Book Bin, which opened at 2924 College in about 1949. The shop also featured the work of local artists through the Studio Gallery which had moved in with the book shop after losing its home on Milvia Street. Soon after the Book Bin opened, a more traditional book shop, the Elmwood Book Shop, opened at 2993 College in the Morris Building. In 1952, it was reported that this store had been sold to two Berkeleyans: Mrs. Margaret McPherson (living on Cherry Street) and Mrs. Mildred Kenady (on Kelsey). Mrs. McPherson had been with the respected Sather Gate Book Store. Their grand re-opening was in November 1952. They soon outgrew the small space and six months later bought the merchandise and fixtures of the

Book Bin, and moved to 2924 College where they also offered a circulating library. Over the years, the store changed hands but the name remained. New owners in 1965, Eva and Charles Baskett, owned the store the longest. They ran a comfortable old-fashioned book store, crowded with tall bookcases and a large table with a vast assortment of greeting cards. Mr. Baskett presided behind the counter at the back of the store with a large sleeping dog next to him on the floor. He enjoyed visiting with customers and had opinions about everything. He was pessimistic about the future of his store, first when rents were being raised in the early 1980s, and then when the well-lit and spacious Avenue Books opened a few doors away, and again when rents went up in the late 1980s. But it was the declining health of Mrs. Baskett that led to the abrupt closure of the store in 1990. By then, a book store had existed at this address for forty years.

Another long-time tenant of the building was Margo Roberts Interiors. Margo Ellen Roberts was born in South Dakota in 1901 and worked as an interior decorator in Berkeley for fifty years. She opened her Elmwood shop at 2926 College sometime between 1950 and 1952, after first remodeling the shopfront. Its sophisticated and tasteful mix of wood and stucco (gray with gray-stained wood) and the stepped-back entry projected a design-conscious image for an interior decorating studio. The architect of the new front is unknown. Margo Roberts also carried items for sale. As Miss Roberts wrote about her inventory, “A varied selection of antiques, silver, and fine furniture. All kinds of lovely things to make your home lovelier.” By 1970, she had moved up the street to a larger space. Her modern storefront served the next businesses well, especially Patou, a clothing store that opened in 1976 offering “exciting new clothing for the contemporary woman.”

Before Patou—or even Margo Roberts—there was a very popular restaurant at 2926 College: Yo-Rel’s Dining Room. Cecelia Williams

opened it on Monday, October 28, 1929 serving “home-cooked” meals. Her advertisements read, “Menus carefully planned to please the individual. Foods selected and prepared by expert women cooks and served simply in an atmosphere of cheerful quiet.” Yo-Rel’s remained in business for ten years. The restau-

rant’s unusual name was Mrs. Williams’ husband’s middle name spelled backwards.

In 1991, John Gordon, the new owner of the building, returned the shopfronts—except for the one that was then a restaurant—to a careful semblance of what had originally been there.

16. Significance

The Bischoff Shop Building No. 3 is significant as one of five buildings designed and built by John A. Bischoff that make up almost a quarter of the streetscape in the Elmwood commercial district. Bischoff was a master designer-builder who moved into the neighborhood and was able to actualize his vision for the commercial strip by buying lots and creating a cohesive group of buildings that help to define the Elmwood commercial district architecturally. This building is significant for its simple bold lines and its

decorative touches confined to the ornate urns set above the roof line on the tops of the piers.

The building is also significant for its association with so many of the iconic Elmwood businesses, such as the many bakeries and restaurants that have occupied 2930 College, Margo Robert’s interior decorating studio, Yo-Rel’s Dining Room, and the long-running Elmwood Bookstore.

Features to Preserve.

- the transoms
- the piers with their vertical inset panels
- the simulated stone façade
- the ornate cast-concrete urns atop the piers

17. Historic Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

Architectural Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

18. Is the property endangered? No

19. Bibliography

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 12822, 14 October, 1922; as well as several other applications for alterations.

Block books and Sanborn maps

Directories.

Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.

Ormsby Donogh Real Estate File (1939–1977), BAHA.

Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.

“A Profile of the Elmwood: Trends and Counter-Trends in a Berkeley Neighborhood Commercial District” Joanna Callenbach, Geography 181 class paper, Spring 1978.

ancestry.com

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“Engaged to Wed John A. Bischoff,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 13 October 1910.

“Big Apartment Sale in Lake District Made,” *Oakland Tribune*, 7 January 1923.

John Bischoff obituary, *Oakland Tribune*, 9 May 1964.

“Recollections of John A. Bischoff, Jr.” by Andrea Gabriel, *Rockridge News*, April 1987.

“Yo-Rel’s to Observe Second Anniversary,” *Berkeley Gazette*, 17 October 1931.

notices of intended sales, *Berkeley Gazette*, 2 March 1944, 23 April 1953, 20 August 1955.

“Book Bin Has New Exhibit,” *Berkeley Gazette*, 25 May 1950.

“Studio Gallery Back to Book Bin,” *Berkeley Gazette*, 2 November 1950.

notice of removal sale at Elmwood Book Shop, *Berkeley Gazette*, 23 April 1953.

notice of inventory sale at Elmwood Book Shop, *Berkeley Gazette*, 22 October 1965.

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article on rent increases in the Elmwood, *San Francisco Examiner*, 21 January 1988.

Margo Roberts obituary, *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, 13 March 1994.

20. Recorder

Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird,
2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

18 December 2025

Additional Photographs.



*One of the cast-concrete urns atop the Bischoff Shop Building No. 3.
Anthony Bruce, 2025.*



*The Bischoff Shop Building No. 3.
Anthony Bruce, 2025.*

The Bischoff Shop Building No. 3. Shops in 1982: Elmwood Book Shop; Patou; The Gallery; Petroushka.

Anthony Bruce, 1982.

The Bischoff Shop Building No. 3. Shops in 1939: August Schaidt Tailor; Yo-Rel's Dining Room; Elmwood Cleaners; Wil-Mar Bakery. Ormsby Donogh, 1939, Donogh Real Estate File, BAH.



Additional Photographs.



Pedestrian pathway between Bischoff Shop Building No. 1 and No. 3, with outdoor seating for In The Wood. left: looking west from College; right: looking east from parking lot. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

Grand OPENING

DETOU

2926 college ave., berkeley, ca. 94705
849-1221

**EXCITING
NEW CLOTHING
FOR THE
CONTEMPORARY
WOMAN**

**SATURDAY
August 28**

2926 college ave. berkeley 849-1221

Petrouchka
Cafe Restaurant

French & Russian Cuisine & Vegetarian Specialties

2930 College Avenue, Berkeley, 848-7850
Open Mon-Sat 11am-midnight. Closed Sunday
Non-smoking Section



IN BERKELEY

**SAVINGS
ON EVERYTHING
IN PRINT**

TECHNICAL TEXT
&
TRADE BOOKS

CHARLES & EVA BASKETT
New Owners

PHONE & MAIL ORDERS
SPECIAL ORDERS
free delivery

**ELMWOOD
BOOKSHOP**

848-4582

2924 COLLEGE AVE. BERKELEY

Advertisements for various businesses in Bischoff Shop Building No. 3.

- Toll House Cookies
- Sandwiches
- Pastry
- Pies
- Cakes

for all occasions

CHATTERTON BAKERY

Berkeley 4236

2526 BANCROFT WAY 2930 COLLEGE AVENUE

Announcing the Opening
OF THE

**Old English
FOOD SHOP**

BAKERY and DELICATESSEN

**2930 COLLEGE AVE.
BERKELEY**

Decorated Cakes
for all occasions

"When Better Cakes and Pies are
made Old English will make them"

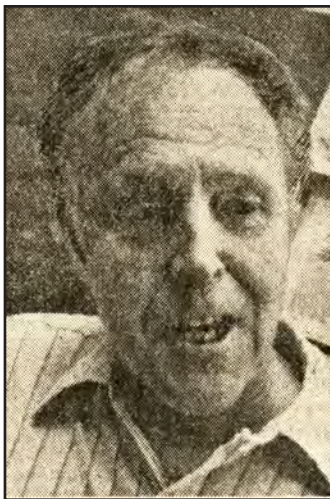
Charles Baskett, owner of the Elmwood Bookshop, with Mrs. Byron Bolfig (Rhoda), owner of the Elmwood Hardware.

Berkeley Gazette, 7 September 1967.

Additional Photographs.



Bischhoff Shops Building No. 3 (at the right), seen in November 1970 when the long-time bakery space was being remodeled for its first restaurant, La Boheme, which opened in early 1971. BAHA Archives.



Charles Baskett, proprietor of the Elmwood Book Shop. Jerry Telfer, San Francisco Chronicle, 1 October 1981.



Interior of the Elmwood Book Shop with owner Charles Baskett and his dog. Brant Ward, San Francisco Chronicle, 22 September 1987.

WRITE IN INK

APPLICATION FOR BUILDING PERMIT FRAME BUILDING

Application is hereby made to the Department of Buildings and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for permission to build a 1 story 4 room frame Building on the W side of College street 172 feet S of Russell street, Being Lot No. _____ Block _____ Tract _____

According to plans and specifications herewith submitted. All provisions of the Building Law will be complied with in the erection of said building whether specified herein or not.

Estimated entire cost of building \$ 6000.00

Building to be occupied as Stores by (No.) 0 families

Size of lot 75 by 148 1/2 feet.

Size of proposed building 75 ft. by 60 ft. Extreme height of building 18 ft.

Height in clear of cellar _____ ft. _____ in. Height in clear of first story 14 ft. _____ in.

Height in clear of second story _____ ft. _____ in. Height in clear of third story _____ ft. _____ in.

Foundation to be of (material) Concrete (Thickness) 12 inches, greatest height of foundation 24 inches.

Width of footings 18 inches.

Mud sills 2 x 6 Main sills 4 x 6 Girders _____ Post _____

on piers _____ If piers are used give size _____ by _____ ft. on centers.

Size of underpinning _____ inches _____ inches O. C. Size of studs in first story 2 x 6 inches 16 inches O. C.

Size of studs in second story _____ inches _____ inches O. C. Size of studs in third story _____ inches O. C.

Exterior wall coverings to be of Plaster Light shaft wall coverings to be of _____

All outside walls covered with shingles or plaster will be close boarded.

First floor joists _____ inches _____ inches on centers. Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Second floor joists _____ inches _____ inches on centers. Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Third floor joists _____ inches _____ inches on centers. Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Ceiling joists _____ inches _____ inches on centers. Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Rafters _____ inches _____ inches on centers. Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Roof covered with Tar & Gravel Steep or flat? _____ Pitch _____

Studs in bearing partitions will be same as outside walls of each story.

Chimneys of Brick lined with Terra Cotta any patent flues? _____

Gas grate flues to be patent chimney or brick? _____

Any dumb waiters or chutes? _____ Any elevator (freight or passenger)? _____

Cave brackets will be solid.

Name of Owner of Ground John A. Bischoff Residence Address _____

Name of Owner of Building _____ Residence Address _____

Name of Lessee of Building _____ Residence Address _____

Name of Architect or Designer _____ Residence Address _____

Name of Builder _____ Residence Address _____

I hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

2924 - 30 College

John A. Bischoff
Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder

2717 Russell st.
Address

This Permit expires one year from date unless sooner revoked by the City Council.

Date OCT 14 1922

Permit No. 12822

Gillick Print.



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 4

Bischoff Shops Building No. 1
2936–2940 College Avenue



The Bischoff Shops Building No. 1, 2936 College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Address:** 2936, 2940 College Avenue
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 052-1568-00800
(Berry-Bangs Tract, Block K, Lot 6)
Dimensions: 50 feet x 148.5 feet
Cross Streets: Ashby Avenue and Russell Street
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 11936
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
a. Building(s): Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
b. Landscape or Open Space: No
c. Historic Site: No
d. District: Yes
e. Other: Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Bischoff Shops Building No. 1
Commonly Known Name: not known
6. **Date of Construction:** 1922 **Factual:** Yes
Source of Information: City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 11299, 14 February 1922
7. **Architect:** John A. Bischoff (designer)
8. **Builder:** John A. Bischoff
9. **Style:** Mediterranean Shopfront
10. **Original Owners:** John A. Bischoff, 2717 Russell Street
Original Use: commercial (1 store: "market")
11. **Present Owner:** Baghdassarian Garbis & Silva Trs (2936 College);
Claudia Hunka (2940 College) [2 condominiums]
Present Occupant: La Méditerranée (2936 College); Your Basic Bird (2940 College)
12. **Present Use:** commercial (two stores)
Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** C-E
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Excellent **Interior:** unknown **Grounds:** Ø
Has the property's exterior been altered? storefronts altered

14. Description.

A one-story class “C” structure built of hollow tile and with the façade surfaced with cement plaster. A fringe of tile on the parapet gives the illusion of a tile roof, and imparts a bit of Spanish Colonial Revival styling. Original transoms remain. The northernmost has a stained-glass (?) depiction of snow-covered mountains. In the space above each transom is a raised horizontal stucco panel. Between the panels and above each pier are applied cast-concrete medallions.

The three storefront bays are separated by piers and are recessed several feet back from the front plane of the building. A sloping surface

of aggregate leads to the remodeled shopfronts. The two shopfronts each utilize about half of what had been the center shopfront. The northern space is a restaurant with outdoor seating accommodated in the set-back and screened from the sidewalk by a wood and iron railing. A sheltering blue awning runs the length of the restaurant.

A blue-and-white painted wooden parklet for additional outdoor seating stands at the curb in front of the restaurant. It was installed during the Covid-19 pandemic. The north wall of the building is exposed along the pedestrian passage, showing the hollow-tile construction.

15. History.

This 1922 building is the first of the one-story shop buildings that John Bischoff built on his extensive property on the west side of College Avenue. It was constructed of hollow tile and has since received seismic bracing (in 1993). It was seemingly intended as one large space for a market, as the permit application states, although there is no indication that it was built that way. However, Joseph Fritz and Emil Kessler opened their Elmwood Delicatessen at 2936 College in the new building, a deli being a close relation to a market. In 1924 the business was transferred to E. Banducci & Co. (Elizabeth and Adolph Banducci), and after two years it was sold once more: to Anibe Ferrari. But, by 1928 he had opened the Genova Ravioli Factory on Telegraph Avenue in Oakland, and the Elmwood Delicatessen was no more. In 1990 the Ferrari name returned to the Elmwood with Ultra Lucca Delicatessen in the Martin Building, owned by Anibe Ferrario’s grandson. The name was later changed to A. G. Ferrari Foods to honor the founder.

The other two first businesses in the building were Tulanian’s Carpets at 2938, which moved to the Wilson-Tulanian Building in 1927; and

Batchelor’s Cabinet Shop at 2940 College. The shop was run by Lester Frederick Batchelor who at times had his brother working in the shop with him. The shop existed until about 1929 when he and his family moved to Ashland. They moved back to the Bay Area, where Lester, at age 50, a furniture maker, was killed by a piece of furniture in a freak accident.

In the late 1930s, two significant new tenants moved in. In 1937 Ivanoff’s Art Studio (more of an art and gift shop) moved into 2936 College. Ivanoff’s had been located at 2916 College in a double storefront since 1922.

The other new tenant was, in 1936, a five-and-ten: the Elmwood Dime Store, founded and operated by Mrs. Edith Quarels in a double storefront at 2940 College. This was the store in the Elmwood that was especially welcoming to children: there was candy and an array of inexpensive small toys. In 1941, Mrs. Quarels hired architect John B. Anthony to redo the storefront with a single entrance. He gave it a Streamline Moderne look in bright red, the traditional color of a Five and Ten Cent store. In 1947, due to ill health, Mrs. Quarels, who was known to the children in the area as “The

Lady in the Elmwood Dime Store,” sold the business to her niece Katherine Quarels. The two of them resided close by at 2926 Benvenue Avenue. Edith died in 1957; two years later Katherine was diagnosed with a serious illness. That may be the reason that she sold the store to brothers Lloyd and Loren Gordon, who seem to have been family friends, having all lived in the same small town in Montana in the 1920s. Lloyd owned the Lloyd Gordon Manufacturing Company in Richmond, which produced store fixtures. In 1961 Lloyd and his wife Velva purchased the building from the Koerber family and by 1971 it was owned by Loren and his wife El Geva, who had moved to a house at 2820 College to be near the store; their son attended Willard Jr. High. In June 1976, Loren died and the Elmwood Dime Store closed by the end of the year, after forty years of being one of the most popular stores in the Elmwood.

When Nicholas Ivanoff retired and closed his gift shop in the north space, Osbert Blundell moved *his* gift shop in. As with Ivanoff, Blundell had started his Blundell Art and Gift Shop at another location: 2995 College Avenue in 1948. He was open for business at 2936 College by 1959 and was there until about 1974 when he moved to Ashby Avenue. Osbert Blundell was born in Liverpool in 1899 and spent twenty years of his working life running barber shops and gift shops for the American President Line. On his many trips around the world he collected items in the various ports of call. Eventually, the Blundells’ Berkeley home was over-run with treasures, and, as a result, Mr. Blundell and his wife Mary decided to open the gift shop to give themselves some elbow room at home. By the time the shop was in its second

location, it offered picture framing as well, accomplished with Mr. Blundell’s expertise.

Loren and El Geva Gordon created an ice cream parlor and sandwich shop in the space when Blundell’s moved to Ashby. It was open by the end of 1974 or early 1975. It was open for such a short time that few remember it, but it paved the way for continued restaurant use of this space. In April 1976, The Egg Shop & Apple Press, which had opened its first shop in Downtown Berkeley a few years before, received a permit to move the front of the shop *back*, creating a space for outdoor seating. The entire front is now remodeled in this way, but it started with only the one shop.

After the Dime Store had remained vacant for quite a while, its double space was redesigned inside and out by designer Richard Alan Hurley in early 1978. Tenants were quick to seize upon the new shop spaces: Andrea Faber with Andrea, a clothing store, in March; and Ellen Shamash with Your Basic Bird, offering rare and exotic birds, in April. The bird shop had started a few years before at 2935 College.

In 1982, a new restaurant replaced the Egg Shop: Cafe La Méditerranée. After the success of their two San Francisco locations, cousins Levon Der Bedrossian and Garbis Baghdassarian opened this Mid-East restaurant in the Elmwood. When Andrea closed, the cafe expanded into part of that space as well.

Both Your Basic Bird and Cafe La Méditerranée remain in the Bischoff building today. This building is one of several in the Elmwood commercial district that is owned by the merchants as condominiums.

16. Significance.

The Bischoff Shop Building No. 1 is significant as one of five buildings designed and built by John A. Bischoff that make up almost a quarter of the streetscape in the Elmwood commercial district. Bischoff was a master designer-builder

who moved into the neighborhood and was able to actualize his vision for the commercial strip by buying lots and creating a cohesive group of buildings that help to define the Elmwood commercial district architecturally.

Features to Preserve.

- the tile-roofed parapet
- the transoms
- the medallions and rectangular stucco panels in the frieze

17. Historic Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: No

Architectural Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

18. Is the property endangered? No

19. Bibliography.

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 11299, 14 February 1922; as well as several other applications for alterations.

Block books and Sanborn maps

Directories.

Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.

Ormsby Donogh Real Estate File (1939–1977), BAHA.

Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.

“A Profile of the Elmwood: Trends and Counter-Trends in a Berkeley Neighborhood Commercial District” Joanna Callenbach, Geography 181 class paper, Spring 1978.

ancestry.com

Property file for 2936–40 College Avenue, City of Berkeley.

“Wedding to Be October Event,” *Oakland Tribune*, 8 October 1910.

“Engaged to Wed John A. Bischoff,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 13 October 1910.

“Big Apartment Sale in Lake District Made,” *Oakland Tribune*, 7 January 1923.

John Bischoff obituary, *Oakland Tribune*, 9 May 1964.

“Recollections of John A. Bischoff, Jr.” by Andrea Gabriel, *Rockridge News*, April 1987.

“Gifts to Wife Overflow House So Couple Start Hobby Shop” by Helen Nicol, *Berkeley Gazette*, 8 June, 1948.

advertisement for Blundell’s Gift Shop, *Berkeley Gazette*, 17 December 1948, page 4.

Edith Quarles obituary, *Berkeley Gazette*, 1 November 1957.

Notice of Intended Sale, *Berkeley Gazette*, 9 June 1959.

Katherine L. Quarles obituary, *Statesman Journal*, 5 July 1962.

Loren G. Gordon obituary, *Berkeley Gazette*, 23 June 1976.

Osbert A. Blundell obituary, *Oakland Tribune*, 16 May 1986.

El Geva Vee Gordon McCreary obituary, on-line, February 2004.

20. Recorder

Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird, 2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

30 November 2025

Additional Photographs.



Rear of the Bischoff Shops Building No. 1, seen from the parking lot and showing original construction and later seismic bracing.
Anthony Bruce, 2025.



The Bischoff Shops Building No. 1, 2936 College Avenue. Shops in 1982: Your Basic Bird; Andrea; The Egg Shop & Apple Press.
Anthony Bruce, 1982.



The Bischoff Shops Building No. 1, 2936 College Avenue. Shops in 1939: Elmwood Dime Store; Ivanoff's. Ormsby Donogh, 1939, Donogh Real Estate File, BAHA.

Additional Photographs.



Bischoff Shops Building No. 1. Interior of Ivanoff's gift shop at 2936 College Avenue. Byron Bolfig, November 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.



Bischoff Shops Building No. 1. Interior of the Elmwood Dime Shop at 2940 College Avenue, with Katherine L. Quarles, niece of the founder, behind the counter. Byron Bolfig, November 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.

Additional Photographs.



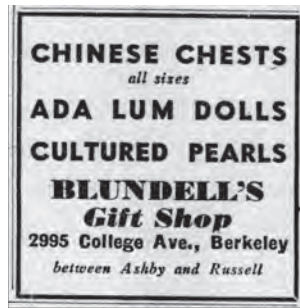
Osbert A. Blundell, owner of Blundell's Gift Shop. Found on-line.



Mary M. Blundell, wife of Osbert Blundell. Found on-line.



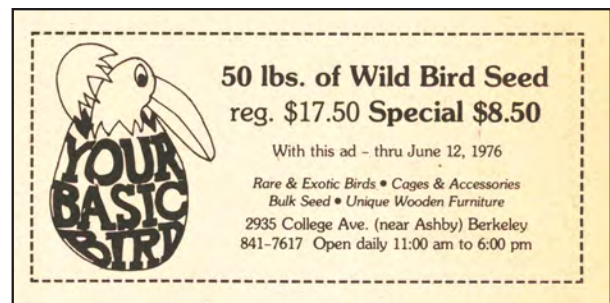
Lloyd and Velva Gordon, who bought the building in 1961. Berkeley Gazette, 12 July 1962.



Advertisement for Blundell's Gift Shop. 1948.



John A. Bischoff, owner, designer, and builder of the building. Oakland Tribune, 30 September 1928.



Advertisements for Andrea (Berkeley Monthly, 1980) and Your Basic Bird (Berkeley Monthly, 1976).

WRITE IN INK

Application for Building Permit.

CLASS A-B AND C BUILDING

Application is hereby made to the Department of Buildings and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for permission to

Build a 1 story 1 room class S building.

on the corner of College street 256' feet S of Russell street.

Side

Being Lot No. Black Tract.

According to plans and Specifications herewith submitted. All provisions of the Building Law will be complied with in the erection, of said building whether specified herein or not.

Estimated entire cost of building \$ 6000.00 Extreme height of building 16 ft.

Size of Lot 50 by 145 feet. Size of proposed building 50 ft. by 100 ft.

Building to be occupied as main by (No.) 1 families.

	WALLS			PIERS OR COLUMNS		JOISTS		GIRDERS			
	HEIGHT	MATERIAL	THICKNESS SIDE FRONT	MATERIAL	SIZE	MATERIAL	SIZE	LONGEST SPAN	MATERIAL	SIZE	LONGEST SPAN
Footings	<u>2'</u>	<u>concrete</u>	<u>12"</u>								
Foundations											
Basement											
1st story		<u>brick</u>		<u>concrete</u>	<u>16"</u>	<u>concrete</u>	<u>floor</u>		<u>6x12 wood</u>	<u>16'</u>	
2nd story											
3rd story											
4th story											
5th story											
6th story											
7th story											
8th story											

Light shaft wall covering to be of

Roof covered with tar & gravel Pitch

Chimneys of brick lined with terra cotta any patent flues?

Gas grate flues to be patent chimney or brick?

Any dumb waiters or chutes?

Any elevator (freight or passenger)

Cove brackets will be solid

Name of Owner of Ground John W. Schopf Res. Address 2717 Russell St.

Name of Owner of Building

Name of Lessee of Building

Name of Architect or Designer

Name of Builder John W. Schopf Bus. Address 2717 Russell

I hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

2918-20 College Ave. John W. Schopf
Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder.

Address 2717 Russell

THIS Permit expires one year from date unless sooner revoked by the City Council.

Date FEB 14 1922 Permit No. 11299

Berkeleys Print West Berkeley

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 11299, 14 February 1922



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 5
Conwell Building
(College Dyeing and Cleaning Works)
2942 College Avenue



Conwell Building, 2942 College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Address:** 2942 College Avenue
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 052-1568-00900
(Berry-Bangs Tract, Block K, Lot: northern 40 feet of Lots 7, 8, 9)
Dimensions: 40 feet x 150 feet
Cross Streets: Ashby Avenue and Russell Street
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 11937
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
a. Building(s): Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
b. Landscape or Open Space: Yes
c. Historic Site: No
d. District: Yes
e. Other: Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Conwell Building
Commonly Known Name: College Cleaners
6. **Date of Construction:** 1910 **Factual:** Yes
Source of Information: City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 429,
2 February 1910
7. **Architect:** none listed on permit application
8. **Builder:** Isaac W. Bridenbecker, 2813 Piedmont Avenue
9. **Style:** Pioneer Storefront
10. **Original Owners:** Dr. Charles C. Conwell & Mrs. Julia Ann Conwell, 2801 Piedmont Ave.
Original Use: commercial (2 stores)
11. **Present Owner:** Srue Corporation & Mar/Dan Corporation, 2437 Durant Avenue,
Ste. 204, Berkeley 94704
Present Occupant: vacant
12. **Present Use:** none
Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** C-E
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Excellent **Interior:** unknown **Grounds:** poor
Has the property's exterior been altered? yes

14. Description.

Built in 1910, this is one of the earliest structures in the district. The Conwell Building has housed a cleaning establishment continuously until about five years ago. The building is now vacant.

The Conwell Building is a one-story wood-frame structure with a cement-plastered front. Originally, the whole building was covered with wood shingles. The building's street façade has been faced with cement plaster since at least 1939, and likely since the 1920s.

The building's gable roof is hidden behind a large, plain false front topped by a narrow cornice. The flat stucco surface between the cornice and the shopfront is enlivened with a row of five diamond shapes formed from colored square tiles. The center diamond is the largest, with the two on each side increasingly small-

er. Two other nearby buildings also feature this distinctive diamond pattern.

The store's entrance is off-center and slightly recessed. Seven medium-size display windows angle their way across the front and create a pleasing rhythm. The windows rest on a high base which has been resurfaced with artificial "ledge rock" in pastel shades. The display windows are topped by transom windows. Two iron handrails lead to the entrance which is one step higher than the sidewalk. The door is generic: glass with aluminum frame. The building is painted blue, off-white, and chrome yellow. At the north edge of the building a door opens to a narrow passage that leads to the rear of the property where there was once a building with sleeping rooms and later a brick dry cleaning workshop, but is now empty and weed strewn.

15. History.

Many questions remain about the history of this building. It is known that the College Cleaners, a venerable business in the Elmwood, was not only one of the earliest businesses (established in 1910), but was also owned by a Japanese-American. How did the business come to be established here? And how were the business owners connected with the Conwells who owned the land and signed the many construction permits over the years?

Julia A. Conwell, the widow of William O. Conwell, purchased the lot in January 1906. Her son Charles C. Conwell was a dentist who first lived in Berkeley in about 1883. By 1900 he had moved his practice from San Francisco to Center Street in downtown Berkeley.

Many widows at the time invested in real estate and Julia Conwell was no stranger to buying and selling property. In fact, in the 1880s, the Conwells and Walter Cobb, a family friend from their days in Gold Hill, Nevada, had invested in property in Los Angeles. Julia pre-

vented their disposing of the land until its value had skyrocketed. In 1902, they sold it at a profit. The profit was so phenomenal that the *Berkeley Gazette* reported that they would now be living on "Easy Street."

In 1903, Walter Cobb moved to Berkeley and built a house at 2801 Piedmont, corner of Stuart. The idea was that the Conwells—Julia, Charles, and his wife Cassie—would live there with him. That is why the Conwells were in the neighborhood and witnessed first hand Fred Koerber's pioneering commercial buildings at College and Ashby being built.

In February 1910, Dr. Conwell took out a permit to construct a one-story, two-room, shingled commercial building on the College Avenue property. Dr. Conwell appears to have built the building specifically for tenants that he knew would occupy it. A large space was for the dry cleaning establishment and a small shop for shoe repairing. Five people were already living in the building by the time the

census was taken on April 20. Kunitalo Ito and his wife Matzu were the shoemakers. George Y. Uchida and his dry cleaning soon followed. Uchida was born in Japan in 1881 and arrived in California in 1909. He went into the laundry business, advertising in the classified section of newspapers. Perhaps he had done work for the Conwells and expressed a goal of opening a dry cleaning business. The business would provide a service for the surrounding neighborhoods and the Conwells would have a monthly income through rent.

Over the next twenty years the Conwells (and Cassie Conwell, after her husband had died in 1924) continually made further improvements to the property, likely at the request of their tenants. The first additional improvement was a long one-story building with a veranda in the northwest corner of the property. This building contained sleeping rooms for George Uchida, his business partner, and employees. By 1920 there were eighteen people living on the premises, but they were not all involved in the dry cleaning business. Kunitalo Ito moved his business to Oakland after the war, but Matsuyoshi Kubota took his place in the shoe repair shop. (Mr. Kubota moved his shop to 2632 Ashby in 1922; perhaps the remodel of the front of the building from two shopfronts to one happened then). Other residents worked as housekeepers in private home, and some of the residents were children. In 1928, architect George F. King designed a brick dry cleaning plant and a boiler room, also at the rear, replacing the dormitory. None of these rear buildings exist today. By 1930, only three people resided at 2942 College Avenue.

Another unanswered question is, who founded the College Cleaners? It seems apparent that George Y. Uchida was the founder. He was listed as proprietor of the business in every city directory from 1911 through 1927, as well as in every newspaper advertisement.

However, an article about the Tsuchida fam-

ily by Hal Johnson in the December 1, 1947 *Berkeley Gazette* states that, "Seiyu Tsuchida established the College Cleaning and Dyeing Company as a pioneer in the Elmwood business district which has grown extensively in the last two decades. He has a speaking acquaintance with nearly half the residents of the area." Seiyu Tsuchida was born in Japan in 1889 and came to San Francisco in 1906. He returned to Japan in 1916 to marry Mon Hamada and they returned to California the next year. Tsuchida is not shown in directories as proprietor of the College Cleaners until 1935, but a 1926 newspaper article ties him to the address of 2942 College Avenue. Perhaps Tsuchida acquired the shop after Uchida retired. At some point Seiyu Tsuchida formed a partnership with Michizo Yokota and Jiniro Masuda as owners of the firm. The partnership was dissolved in 1954.

During the war years, the College Cleaners was kept open by Rev. Walter Groesbeck, the pastor of the Free Methodist Church, which the Tsuchida family had attended. Seiyu Tsuchida was able to return to his intact business after the war.

After a falling out with the then-property owner in the early 1990s over responsibility of contamination from a leak in an underground storage tank, the College Cleaners closed for good in 1996 after eighty-six years in business. It was replaced by C & C Cleaners, which opened the same year. It closed in about 2018.

A yellow placard has been posted on the site for about five years, which describes the proposed construction of a new two-story building. The designer and developer are StudioKDA, an architectural firm. They have submitted drawings prepared in 2020 to the City for their Mixed-Use College Avenue Development, which is actually *two* buildings and includes both commercial and residential uses.

Significance.

The Conwell Building from 1910 is significant as one of the early buildings in the Elmwood commercial district, built when all businesses were clustered on the west side of College and on Ashby.

The Conwell Building is also significant as

having housed the first minority-owned businesses in the Elmwood: College Dyeing and Cleaning Works and Ito shoemakers. The shoe making business opened in April 1910 and led the way for other minority-owned businesses in the Elmwood to follow through the years.

Features to Preserve.

- the cornice
- **the five tile diamond shapes above the transoms**
- the angled shopfront with small display win-

dows, each topped by a transom

- the bulkheads faced with simulated ledge rock made of colored concrete in muted shades of red, yellow, and gray

17. Historic Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes
Architectural Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: No

19. Bibliography.

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 429, 2 February 1910; as well as several other applications for alterations.

Block books and Sanborn maps

Directories.

Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.

Ormsby Donogh Real Estate File (1939–1977), BAHA.

Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.

“A Profile of the Elmwood: Trends and Counter-Trends in a Berkeley Neighborhood Commercial District” Joanna Callenbach, Geography 181 class paper, Spring 1978.

ancestry.com

“8 Hurt in Bay Auto Accidents within 24 Hours,” *Oakland Tribune*, 11 February 1926.

“So We’re Told: Nisei Hero is Modest Author” by Hal Johnson, *Berkeley Gazette*, 1 December 1947.

dissolution of partnership, *Berkeley Gazette*, 9 August 1954.

Seiyu Tsuchida obituary, *Berkeley Gazette*, 23 May 1969.

20. Recorder

Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird, 2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

30 January 2026.

Additional Photographs.



The Conwell Building, 2942 College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 1982.



The Conwell Building, 2942 College Avenue. Ormsby Donogh, 1939, Donogh Real Estate File, BAHA.

Additional Photographs.



The Conwell Building, 2942 College Avenue, interior. Byron Bolfig, November 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.



Simulated ledge rock bulkhead at the Conwell Building, 2942 College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

College Dyeing and Cleaning Works

GEO. Y. UCHIDA, Prop.

LADIES' and Gents' Suits and Gloves
Cleaned, Pressed, Steam Cleaned,
Dyed and Repaired

Ladies' Suits and Silk Clothes Work
Our Specialty

Mending Neatly Done

**SUITS CLEANED, PRESSED and
DELIVERED SAME DAY**

2924 College Avenue

Near Ashby Avenue Berkeley, California

Telephones: Berkeley 5182 and 2235J

Advertisement for the College Dyeing and Cleaning Works from the Berkeley Daily Gazette, 1 March 1923.

WRITE IN INK

APPLICATION FOR BUILDING PERMIT, No. 429

FRAME BUILDING

Application is hereby made to the Building Inspector of the City of Berkeley for permission to build a

1 story 2 1/2 room frame Store

on the West side of College Ave street 130 feet 1 ft. 1 ft.

Wichhyter street. Estimated entire cost of building \$ 10000

Building to be occupied as Store by [No.] _____ families

Size of Lot 40 by 100 feet.

Size of proposed building 20 ft. by 40 ft. Elevation height of building 10 ft.

Height in clear of cellar _____ ft. _____ in. Height in clear of first story 10 ft. _____ in.

Height in clear of second story _____ ft. _____ in. Height in clear of third story _____ ft. _____ in.

Height in clear of fourth story _____ ft. _____ in. Height in clear of fifth story _____ ft. _____ in.

Foundation to be of (material) Concrete (The knees) _____ inches, greatest height of foundation 10 inches. Width of footings 12 inches

Bed sills 2 by 6 Main Sills 2 by 6 Orders _____ by _____ Post _____

on piers _____ by _____ If piers are used, give size _____ ft. on centers.

Size of underpinning _____ by _____ inches _____ inches on centers.

Size of studs in first story 2 by 4 inches 16 inches on centers.

Size of studs in second story _____ by _____ inches _____ inches on centers.

Size of studs in third story _____ by _____ inches _____ inches on centers.

Size of studs in fourth story _____ by _____ inches _____ inches on centers.

Size of studs in fifth story _____ by _____ inches _____ inches on centers.

Exterior wall covering to be of Shingles Light shaft wall covering to be of _____

First floor joists 2 by 8 inches 16 inches on centers. Longest span between supports 11 1/2 ft.

Second floor joists _____ by _____ inches _____ inches on centers. Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Third floor joists _____ by _____ inches _____ inches on centers. Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Fourth floor joists _____ by _____ inches _____ inches on centers. Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Fifth floor joists _____ by _____ inches _____ inches on centers. Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Balkers 2 by 4 inches 32 inches on centers. Longest span between supports 7 ft.

Road covered with Shingles Slope or flat _____ Pitch 10

Are studs in bearing partitions to be same as outside walls of each story? Yes Give size _____

Chimneys of _____ lined with _____ any patent flues? Yes

Gas grate fixtures to be patent chimney or brick? _____

Any dumb waiters or chutes? _____ Any elevator (freight or passenger)? _____

If exterior walls are to be covered with shingles, walls must be close boarded, up and down boarding prohibited.

Cover brackets must be solid.

Name of Architect _____ Address _____

Name of Owner E. C. Connell Address Stuart

Name of Builder E. C. Connell Address _____

STATE OF CALIFORNIA }
COUNTY OF ALAMEDA } ss
CITY OF BERKELEY }

The undersigned, being first duly sworn upon oath, deposes and says that the statements herein contained are true and correct, and hereby agrees to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub sidewalk place by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

Subscribed and sworn to before me
FEB 2 - 1910

E. C. Connell Per E. C. Connell
Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder.

E. C. Connell Address _____

City of Berkeley

Building Inspector must be notified when building is ready for lathing, or before interior walls are covered.

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 429,
2 February 1910



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 6
Koerber Buildings
2944 & 2956 College Avenue and 2637 Ashby Avenue



Koerber buildings, 2944 College Avenue (above), and 2637 Ashby Avenue (right). Anthony Bruce, 2025.



The 1907 Koerber Building, 2956 College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2020.

1. **Street Address:** 2956 College Avenue, 2637 Ashby Avenue, 2944 College Avenue
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 052-1568-01101
(Berry-Bangs Tract, Block K, Lot: southern portion of Lots 7, 8, 9)
Dimensions: 140 feet x 150 feet
Cross Streets: Benvenue Avenue and Russell Street
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 11932
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
 - a. **Building(s):** Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
 - b. **Landscape or Open Space:** No
 - c. **Historic Site:** No
 - d. **District:** Yes
 - e. **Other:** Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Koerber Buildings
Commonly Known Name: not known
6. **Date of Construction:** 1907 (2956 College); 1909 (2637 Ashby); 1910 (2944 College)
Factual: Yes
Source of Information: Contract notice (2956 College); City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 2567, 13 April 1909 (2637 Ashby); City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit 443, 7 February 1910 (2944 College)
7. **Architect:** unknown (2956 College); Leland S. Lewis, designer (2637 Ashby); Cummings & Weymouth (2944 College)
8. **Builder:** unknown (2956 College); Leland S. Lewis (2637 Ashby); Patrick Bros. (2944 College)
9. **Style:** Colonial Revival (2956 College); Storefront (2944 College, 2637 Ashby)
10. **Original Owners:** Fred C. Koerber, 2647 Ashby Avenue
Original Use: commercial and residential
11. **Present Owner:** Gordon Commercial Properties LLC
Present Occupant: Bluemercury; vacant; Harvey Slocombe Ice Cream (2956 College); Dream Fluff Donuts (2637 Ashby); Cousin Home; Summer Kitchen (2944 College)
12. **Present Use:** residential and commercial

Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** C-E
13. **Present Condition of Property:** Excellent
Exterior: Excellent **Interior:** unknown **Grounds:** Ø
Has the property's exterior been altered? yes

14. Description.

2956 College Avenue.



Built in **1907**, the Koerber Building is a two-story frame Colonial Revival building. It features four bay windows on the second floor, including a five-sided corner bay. The large projecting cornice is at the base of the parapet and includes modillions, a dentil course, and a frieze band below.

The building has been restored by the current owner. The lime sherbet stucco was removed

revealing the original board siding; missing details were recreated; and the corner store, remodeled by designer Ed Raberg in early 1953 with sandstone ledgerrock and stainless steel, was returned to a semblance of what may have originally existed. The two shopfronts facing College Avenue were also returned to an earlier look. The entrance to the second floor apartments is on College between the corner store and the other two storefronts. Bulkheads have raised wooden horizontal panels, each with an elaborate iron vent grille in the center.

2637 Ashby Avenue.



Built in **1909**, this was one of two side-by-side small one-story, wood-frame shop buildings. It appears to have been altered at the same time as the stable at 2944 College Avenue, as they both feature the same simulated cut-stone surface treatment and diamond embedded frieze (although there are two

diamonds here rather than five). There are two small-paned transom windows; the one on the right has been replaced by white vinyl with simulated muntins.

Piers on each end frame the shopfront which is in traditional style, except for the sandstone ledgerrock resurfacing the bulkhead from 1951. The building originally housed one shop and later two. It has been one shop since 1951.

2944 College Avenue.



Built in **1910**, this is a two-story frame building which appears from the street to be one story. It was built as a two-story stable that was part of a large 1910 development that wrapped around the earlier corner building. The façade is faced with cement plaster that is marked to resemble

cut stone. A large, plain cornice projects from the front wall. Below the cornice there is a recessed horizontal panel that contains five diamond shapes similar in configuration to those on the College Cleaners building next door.

It is unknown when the stable was converted to shops. Three piers delineate the shops, which are traditional in design, with recessed entries, transoms, and tile bulkheads.

15. History.

Background on Fred Koerber.

Frederick Charles Koerber (1876–1953) owned several grocery stores in Oakland and Berkeley before branching into real estate development, mortgage banking, and municipal politics.

Fred was born in San Jose, one of nine siblings. His parents had immigrated from Germany as teenagers. The father, George Koerber was a wood dealer, an occupation taken up by Fred's brother, Adolph. Another brother, John,

became a grocer, and Fred most likely got his start with him.

Eventually Fred moved to Oakland, where in 1904 he married the widow Sarah Elizabeth Cash Cook (1870–1956). His store was located at 1932 Broadway, and he was active in the California State Retail Grocers' and Merchants' Association.

A shrewd businessman, in 1907 Koerber constructed a building of stores and apartments at the junction of Ashby and College avenues, where the Key Route's No. 6 streetcar, established in 1905, made a stop. The Koerber grocery was relocated to this building, and the owners took up residence in one of the apartments on the second floor.

The upscale grocery trade was based on home deliveries, and Koerber delivered. Business flourished, and Koerber quickly added to his holdings on adjacent lots. In 1909 he obtained a permit to construct a one-story, two-room store on Ashby Avenue. By 1911, he owned seven contiguous commercial buildings.

By the early 1920s, Koerber had moved on from the grocery business to pursue other activities. In March 1923, he filed his candidacy for a seat on the Berkeley city council in the May election that would launch the city manager form of government. He was endorsed by the merchants' association of his district but wasn't elected that year.

In 1925, he ran again, on a slate of four candidates endorsed by the Berkeley Municipal League. All four won their seats, with Koerber coming in fourth, having garnered 6,700 votes.

By mid-September, a mere four months past the election, Koerber tendered his resignation, claiming that "owing to the press of private business he was unable to devote the required time to the council." The private business concerned mainly real estate.

Excerpted from "Grocer-Politician Fred C. Koerber left Berkeley a Double Legacy" by Daniella Thompson, 2008; BAHA website.

2956 College Avenue.



The Koerber Building was the first commercial building to be built in what was to become the Elmwood commercial district. It cost \$7,000 and contained two stores on the ground floor and flats above. The building was constructed at the far southeast corner of the Berry-Bangs Tract, which extends from Derby to Ashby west of College. The section between Russell and Ashby had been added in 1903 to the original 1902 subdivision. The tract's advertising brochure states, "Residences only. No stores or wood-yards." Most likely, there were no deed restrictions to enforce this rule, or, perhaps the developers soon realized that a corner store would be needed by the growing population.

Over the years, the configuration of the retail space on the ground floor of the Koerber Building changed. At first, it consisted of two shop spaces, each running north-south. One of these was Fred Koerber's grocery. That later changed to four shops running east-west, all with College Avenue addresses. By 1950 that number had been reduced to three, and it remains that way today, with the largest space at the corner.

Two known long-time tenants in the corner store were French's Coffee Shop (1935–1952) and Merit Cycles & Toys (1953–c1975). Russell R. French had been an ice cream maker in East Oakland. In 1935, Joseph Edy, the famous confectioner with shops in Oakland and Berkeley, directed a remodel of the corner store. Had he planned to open an "Edy's" on that corner or was he helping a fellow confectioner? French's was more than an ice cream parlor as its sign advertised both fountain and lunch.

In 1952, Russell French's coffee shop business was for sale. There must have been no takers for this type of business in this location because in 1953 a mainstay of the Elmwood in the 1950s and '60s—Merit Cycles & Toys—opened. An

advertisement in the spring 1954 telephone directory, shows a sketch of the new modern shopfront with a facing of Arizona ledgerrock for the bulkheads, expanses of plate glass, a stainless steel corner column, and a band of stainless steel running above the windows and supporting free-standing lettering spelling out the name of the store. This was one of five impressive Mid-Century Modern shopfront remodels in the Elmwood, of which only one remains. The next tenant, in 1978, was Slater-Marinoff, selling modern furnishings. One of the proprietors, Patsy Slater, was especially pleased with the existing shopfront as it suited their business so well.

The northernmost shop in the Koerber Building was home to two successive shoe repair shops. Floyd Brown was there in the 1940s. And, at the same time, Lester Baranco ran Lester's Shine Parlor in the shop. John's Shoe Repair, owned

by Lofty Briggs, Jr., followed in the same spot from 1967 until at least the late 1980s.

Members of the Koerber family owned the property until it was purchased by Berkeleyan John Gordon in 2005. The corner building's shops were vacant. John Gordon refurbished the building and restored its exterior. The hospital-green stucco was removed, revealing original siding, and shopfronts appropriate to 1907 were created. Businesses filled the empty spaces and the building reclaimed its place as a vibrant and attractive centerpiece of the Elmwood commercial district. The restoration was given a Preservation Award by the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association in 2007, one hundred years after the Koerber Building was built.

2637 Ashby Avenue.



Koerber Building No. 2. In 1909, Rolla D. Fuller, a druggist whose business had been at Shattuck and Dwight Way, moved his pharmacy to

this new Koerber Building. He had recently rented a brand-new house on Plaza Drive, in easy walking distance of his new store. Soon after the drugstore was opened, the Berkeley postmaster established Station No. 8 in the store that July. Fuller was appointed clerk, although the day-to-day post office work fell to his druggist partner and father-in-law John F. Croone. At this point, Berkeley had its main post office (on Shattuck Avenue), two branch offices, and eight "stations." Later, when Station No. 8 moved to the Dondero Building, its name was changed to Elmwood Station.

Rolla Fuller did not stay long. In 1910, Alameda developers built a new commercial build-

ing across Ashby from the Koerber properties. Fuller and Croone immediately moved into the large corner space, opening the College Avenue Pharmacy. Years later, strangely enough, Station No. 8 was still listed on the north side of Ashby with Rolla D. Fuller as clerk.

The business in Koerber Building No. 2 that has been there the longest is Dream Fluff Donuts. The popular doughnut store was established by the Herrenbruck family who lived in the neighborhood. It was there as early as 1954, but may go back to 1951 when the building was converted from two shops to one. It has the same type of ledgerrock bulkheads as the store to the east which was remodeled about the same time.

2944 College Avenue.*Koerber Building No. 3.*

This building is the remaining piece of the large project that Fred Koerber built in 1910.

It included a large, roofed-over coal and wood yard that wrapped around the back of the Koerber Building from Ashby to College. The business was run by the F. A. Nassie Company until

about 1918. On Ashby, along with the entrance to the yard, were three small shop buildings, one housing a barber shop and another, the Elmwood Creamery. On the College Avenue side, a two-story stable opened into the yard. Koerber Building No. 3 is the stable converted to shops. No record has been found of when this conversion happened, although it may have been in about 1925 when the Acme Garage, which was in the space previously, had closed.

16. Significance.

The 1907 Koerber Building is exceptionally significant as the first commercial building to be built in the present day Elmwood commercial district. In fact, Fred Kroeber created the Elmwood commercial district by buying enough lots in the Berry-Bangs Tract to create a nucleus of commercial buildings that would soon attract other investors. The ground floor provided space for a much-needed grocery store for the rapidly growing surrounding neighborhoods. Above, there were flats where the Koerber family could live.

Koerber Building No. 2 is the second commercial building in the district and is significant because its construction was the first sign that the original Koerber Building was not merely a neighborhood corner store, but was the beginning of a commercial district. This building

is also significant for housing the same business—Dream Fluff Donuts—for over seventy years.

Koerber Building No. 3, on College Avenue, is significant as a tangible link to a past commercial activity that was once ubiquitous around Berkeley: the fuel yard. Coal and wood were sold to heat the houses in the surrounding neighborhoods. The College Avenue building was the stable for the horse-driven wagons. It carried on the transportation theme as an automobile garage until the mid-1920s when it was converted to shops.

The Koerber property at the northwest corner of College and Ashby—with the three earliest buildings—is the historic hub of the Elmwood commercial district.

Features to Preserve.

- Koerber Building: the shopfronts, the transoms, the cornice, the upstairs windows, the second-floor bays, the supports under the bays, the siding, the air raid siren on the roof.
- Koerber Building No. 2: the Arizona ledgerock bulkheads, the transom with wood muntins, the two diamond shapes above the transoms, the boxy cornice, the incised pattern

of cut stone in the stucco exterior including the cornice, the screen door.

- Koerber Building No. 3: traditional-style shopfronts with maroon tile bulkheads, transoms, five diamond shapes in the frieze, the boxy cornice, the incised pattern of cut stone in the stucco exterior including the cornice.

17. Historic Value— Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

Architectural Value— Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

18. Is the property endangered? No

19. Bibliography.

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 2567, 13 April 1909; as well as several alteration applications.

Block books and Sanborn maps

City directories.

Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.

Ormsby Donogh Real Estate File (1939–1977), BAHA.

Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.

Berkeley Tourist and Business Survey, 1924.

“A Profile of the Elmwood: Trends and Counter-Trends in a Berkeley Neighborhood Commercial District” Joanna Callenbach, Geography 181 class paper, Spring 1978.

ancestry.com

“Permits for New Buildings,” *Berkeley Gazette*, 24 May 1907.

“2007 BAHA Preservation Award Winners,” *BAHA Newsletter*, No. 126, Summer 2007.

“Grocer-Politician Fred C. Koerber Left Berkeley a Double Legacy” by Daniella Thompson, *BAHA Website*, 9 January 2008.

20. Recorder

Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird, 2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

17 October 2025

Additional Photographs.



Koerber Building, 2956 College Avenue; College Avenue frontage. Anthony Bruce, 2020.



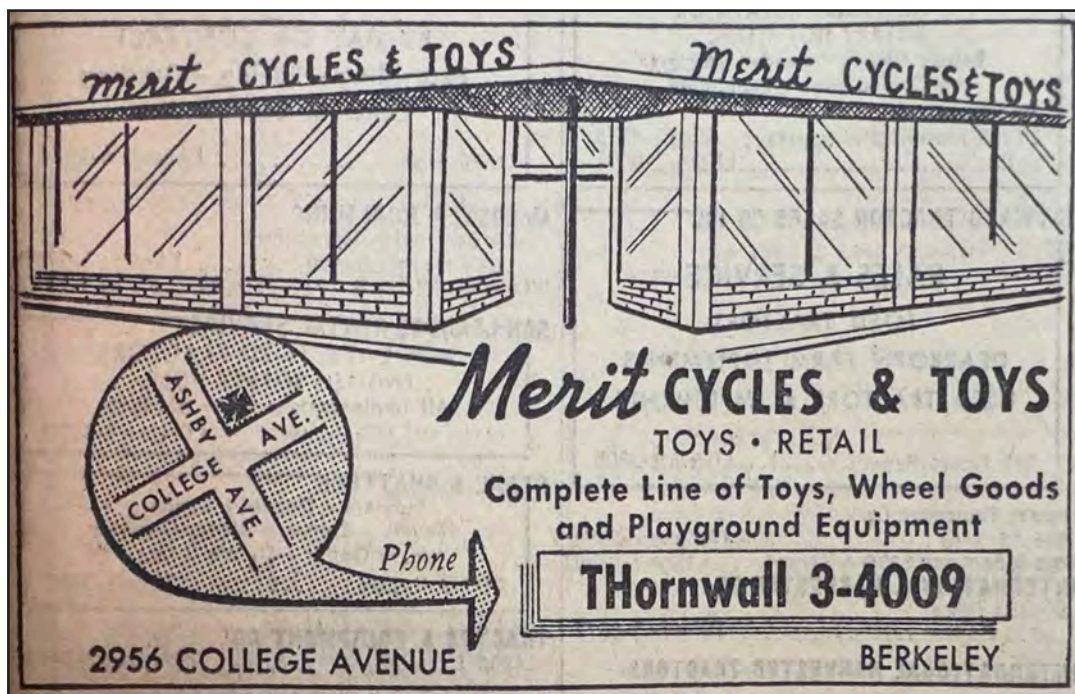
Koerber Building, 2956 College Avenue. Stores in 1982: Slater/Marinoff & Co.; John's Shoe Repairing. Anthony Bruce, 1982.

Koerber Building, 2956 College Avenue; College Avenue frontage. Stores in 1939 included: furniture; California Citrus Distributors; Supreme Cleaners, French's Cafe. Ormsby Donogh, 1939, Donogh Real Estate File, BAH.

Additional Photographs.



The Koerber Building, 2956 College Avenue, after restoration. Waiting for the new anchor tenant Lulu Lemon to open. Daniella Thompson, 2008.



Display ad in the April 1954 Oakland Telephone Directory for Merit Cycles & Toys, showing the new, Modern glass, steel, and sandstone corner storefront of the Koerber Building..

Additional Photographs.

Koerber Building, 2944 College Avenue. Shops in 1982: Butler Natural Foods; Great Lengths Hair Parlor. Anthony Bruce, 1982.



Koerber Building, 2637 Ashby Avenue. Shops in 1982: Dream Fluff Donuts. Anthony Bruce, 1982.



Koerber Building, 2637 Ashby Avenue, entrance with Arizona ledgerrock-surfaced bulkheads. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Additional Photographs.

Koerber Building, 2956 College Avenue. Brown's Shoe Repair and Lester's Shine Parlor, 2948 College Avenue. With Floyd Brown and Lester Baranco. Byron Bolfig, November 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.



Koerber Building, 2944 College Avenue. Interior of Roberts Jewelry, 2946 College Avenue. Byron Bolfig, November 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.



Lofty Briggs, Jr., owner of John's Shoe Repair, 2948 College Avenue. Photo by Jerry Telfer, "A Grassroots Fight for the Status Quo" by Ann Bancroft and Henry Schulman, San Francisco Chronicle, 1 October 1981.



Lester Baranco and Byron Bolfig in Lester's Shine Parlor, 2948 College Avenue.

November 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.

APPLICATION FOR BUILDING PERMIT, No. 2567

FRAME BUILDING

Application is hereby made to the Building Inspector of the Town of Berkeley for permission to build a
 one story, 2 room frame building
 on the corner of Ashby and College Ave. street. Estimated entire cost of building \$ 150.
 Building to be occupied as store. No. 1 families
 Size of Lot 25 by 100.0 feet
 Size of proposed building 25 ft. by 60 ft. Extreme height of building 20 ft.
 Height in clear of cellar 10 ft. in. Height in clear of first story 14 ft. in.
 Height in clear of second story 10 ft. in. Height in clear of third story 10 ft. in.
 Height in clear of fourth story 10 ft. in. Height in clear of fifth story 10 ft. in.
 Foundation to be of (material) concrete (Thickness) 12 inches, greatest height of foundation 12 inches, width of footings 12 inches
 Mud sills 2 by 6 Main sills 4 by 6 Girders 4 by 6 Posts 4 by 6
 on piers 2 by 6 If piers are used, give size 12 by 12 8 ft. on centers
 Size of underpinning 2 by 6 inches 16 inches on centers
 Size of studs in first story 2 by 4 inches 16 inches on centers
 Size of studs in second story 2 by 4 inches 16 inches on centers
 Size of studs in third story 2 by 4 inches 16 inches on centers
 Size of studs in fourth story 2 by 4 inches 16 inches on centers
 Size of studs in fifth story 2 by 4 inches 16 inches on centers
 Exterior wall covering to be of Boston Light shaft wall covering to be of none
 First floor joists 2 by 8 inches 16 inches on centers. Longest span between supports 12 ft.
 Second floor joists 2 by 8 inches 16 inches on centers. Longest span between supports 12 ft.
 Third floor joists 2 by 8 inches 16 inches on centers. Longest span between supports 12 ft.
 Fourth floor joists 2 by 8 inches 16 inches on centers. Longest span between supports 12 ft.
 Fifth floor joists 2 by 8 inches 16 inches on centers. Longest span between supports 12 ft.
 Rafters 2 by 6 inches 22 inches on centers. Longest span between supports 12 ft.
 Roof covered with heavy board Steep or flat? flat Pitch 3 in 12
 Are studs in bearing partitions to be same as outside walls of each story? yes Give size 2 by 4
 Chimneys of none lined with none any patent flues? no
 Gas grate flues to be patent chimney or brick? none
 Any dumb waiters or chutes? no Any elevator (freight or passenger)? no

If exterior walls are to be covered with shingles, walls must be close boarded up and loose boarding prohibited.

Once brackets must be solid.

Name of Applicant R. Lewis Address 2950 Bonaventure
 Name of Owner R. Lewis Address 2950 Bonaventure
 Name of Builder R. Lewis Address 2950 Bonaventure

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

COUNTY OF ALAMEDA

TOWN OF BERKELEY

The undersigned, being first duly sworn upon oath, deposes and says that the statement herein contained are true and correct, and hereby agrees to pay, indemnify and keep harmless the Town of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said Town in consequence of the granting of this permit or from the use or occupancy of any structure, street or sidewalk place by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the Town of Berkeley.

Subscribed and sworn to before me

APR 13 1909

Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder.

Address 2950 Bonaventure

Clerk.

Building Inspector must be notified when building is ready for laying, or before interior walls are covered.

WRITE IN INK

APPLICATION FOR BUILDING PERMIT, No. 443

FRAME BUILDING

Application is hereby made to the Building Inspector of the City of Berkeley for permission to build a

1 story room frame Block

on the North Ashby ave side 150 feet West of

College Ave designated entire cost of building \$ 28.00

Building to be occupied as Store Barber Shop & Coal Yard [No.] families

Size of Lot 109 by 100 feet.

Size of proposed building 109 ft. by 14 ft. Extreme height of building Twenty-two ft.

Height in clear of cellar ft. in. Height in clear of first story 14 ft. in.

Height in clear of second story ft. in. Height in clear of third story ft. in.

Height in clear of fourth story ft. in. Height in clear of fifth story ft. in.

Foundation to be of (material) Concrete (Thickness) 12 inches, greatest height of foundation 14 inches. Width of footings 12 inches

Mud sills 2x8 by Main Sills by Girders by Post on piers 4 by 8 If piers are used, give size 18" by 13" ft. on centers.

Size of underpinning by inches inches on centers.

Size of studs in first story 2 by 6 inches 16 inches on centers.

Size of studs in second story by inches inches on centers.

Size of studs in third story by inches inches on centers.

Size of studs in fourth story by inches inches on centers.

Size of studs in fifth story by inches inches on centers.

Exterior wall covering to be of Plaster Light shaft wall covering to be of

First floor joists 2 by 8 inches inches on centers. Longest span between supports 9 ft.

Second floor joists by inches inches on centers. Longest span between supports ft.

Third floor joists by inches inches on centers. Longest span between supports ft.

Fourth floor joists by inches inches on centers. Longest span between supports ft.

Fifth floor joists by inches inches on centers. Longest span between supports ft.

Rafters 2 by 8 inches 24 inches on centers. Longest span between supports 11' 9" ft.

Roof covered with Tar & Shingles Pitch

Are studs in bearings partitions to be same as outside walls of each story? Give size by

Chimneys lined with any patent flues? 3-6"

Gas grate flues to be patent chimney or brick?

Any dumb waiters or chutes? Any elevator (freight or passenger)?

If exterior walls are to be covered with shingles, walls must be close boarded: up and down boarding prohibited.

Cove bricks must be solid.

Name of Architect Cunningham & Hayner Address 1600 San Francisco Bldg

Name of Owner H. C. Kasper Address College & Ashby ave

Name of Builder Patrick Bros Address 2403 Valley St Ber

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF ALAMEDA
CITY OF BERKELEY

The undersigned, being first duly sworn upon oath, deposes and says that the statements herein contained are true and correct, and hereby agrees to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk place by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

Subscribed and sworn to before me

FEB 7 1910

B. M. Patrick block
Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder.
Address 2403 Valley St Ber

H. L. Well
1304
Clerk.

Building Inspector must be notified when building is ready for lathing, or before interior walls are covered.



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 7
Claremont Garage
2629 Ashby Avenue



Claremont Garage Building, 2629 Ashby Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Address:** 2627, 2629, 2633, 2635 Ashby Avenue
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 052-1568-01201
(Berry-Bangs Tract, Block K, Lot 10 and portions of Lots 9 and 8)
Dimensions: 120 feet x 110 to 120 feet
Cross Streets: Benvenue Avenue and College Avenue
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 11939
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
 - a. **Building(s):** Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
 - b. **Landscape or Open Space:** No
 - c. **Historic Site:** No
 - d. **District:** Yes
 - e. **Other:** Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Claremont Garage, Elmwood Garage, Wright's Garage
Commonly Known Name: not known
6. **Date of Construction:** 1925 **Factual:** Yes
Source of Information: City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 22294, 10 September 1925.
7. **Architect:** B. Reede Hardman, 1st National Bank Building, Berkeley
8. **Builder:** Carlson Le Prest Company, 206 Koerber Building, University Avenue
9. **Style:** Italian Farmhouse & Storefront
10. **Original Owners:** Fred C. Koerber, 206 Koerber Building, University Avenue
Original Use: residential and commercial
11. **Present Owner:** Gordon Commercial Properties LLC
Present Occupant: Casa de Chocolate; Labels; Lift Me Up; Yama; Mighty Pilates; Worthy; Donato & Co.
12. **Present Use:** commercial
Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** C-E, R-2A
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Excellent **Interior:** unknown **Grounds:** Ø
Has the property's exterior been altered? new shopfronts

14. Description.

Built in 1925 as a large, high, one-story garage and store building, the Claremont Garage was constructed of reinforced concrete, brick, and hollow tile, with a wood-truss ceiling. Two large openings in the center flanked by shopfronts were the garage entries. Now, those open entries and the three shopfronts have all been redone as traditional shopfronts, but with tall, elongated doors and display windows. Transoms match the widths of doors and windows below. All trim is painted dark green.

The building is faced with randomly laid buff and reddish brown pressed brick. The façade is divided into five bays by brick-clad piers that extend slightly above the parapet. All is symmetrical except that an additional wider shop-

front extends eastward. Its façade is treated as the rest of the building, but with a stepped parapet at the center of the shopfront. This section may either be an existing store building built by Fred Koerber in 1909 that was incorporated into the garage building, or its dimensions were retained for this “extra” shopfront when the garage was built.

Centered above the garage entrance is what was once a penthouse apartment. It was constructed of hollow tile and had integrally colored tan cement plaster and brick quoining. The penthouse has been rebuilt without the quoining, but the tile roof and small-pane casement windows remain.

15. History.

In the summer of 1911, Dewey Collignon and Clarence Morrill built a garage on Ashby designed by George F. King. The same year, Morrill’s son Enoch built the Berkeley Theater and the Morrill Apartments (Landmark #85) in downtown Berkeley, both designed by King. The garage was built on property to the west of and adjoining the Koerber property. The garage was quite large. Its roof and exterior walls were of corrugated iron and it was built on a concrete slab. The business was called the Claremont Garage and run by Fenton J. Zehner.

Sometime before 1921 Fred C. Koerber purchased the Claremont Garage property. He combined it with some of his other property fronting on Ashby (the three small 1910 shop buildings, the coal and wood yard, and the westerly of the two 1909 shop buildings). In 1925, Koerber commissioned Berkeley architect B. Reede Hardman to design the ultimate in automotive garages on the large piece of cleared land.

The Claremont Garage *business* seems to have survived the construction of the new building, but Zehner had not run the business since 1917.

Then, about 1929, an Oakland accounting firm, Farrell & Mitchell, moved into the building. William E. Mitchell also was manager of the *Elmwood* Garage at the same address. It seems the garage was under new ownership and a name change was in order. Thereafter, William G. Farrell ran the garage, with his wife Marian in the office, until 1978. That year, after almost fifty years, Farrell’s Inc. transferred all the accoutrements that made up Farrell’s Elmwood Garage to Wright’s Automotive Service. Wright’s also had a long run.

When John Gordon purchased the former Fred Koerber properties from his descendants in 2004, he realized that the large, open space of the brick garage needed upgrading to modern seismic standards. Wright’s moved to a new location in West Berkeley. John Gordon determined that, due to its location on a narrow and busy thoroughfare, the building would function better with pedestrian-oriented retail shops (of which there had always been two or three). After the structural work was finished, The Bay Architects were commissioned to design the interior and the ground floor exterior. The

building presents a handsome face to the street and has successfully existed since then with a variety of shops and a restaurant for fine din-

ing; every bit as successful as the garage was in its day.

16. Significance.

The Claremont Garage Building holds architectural significance for the City of Berkeley. Although most of its length is not taller than other nearby one-story buildings, it presents a monumental appearance due to the texture and rich variegated color of its brick surface, the verticality of its brick piers, and the ver-

ticality of the components of the shopfronts. The penthouse adds actual height and gives an imposing and substantial feeling to the entire building. The Claremont Garage is one of the premier buildings, architecturally, in the Elmwood commercial district and may be the finest designed garage in Berkeley.

Features to Preserve.

- the shopfronts
- the unpainted brick exterior
- the penthouse with its tile roof and mullioned casement windows

17. Historic Value— Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes
Architectural Value— Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

18. Is the property endangered? No

19. Bibliography.

Building Permit Application No. 22294, 10 September 1925, as well as earlier applications.
 Block books and Sanborn maps
 Directories.
 Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.
 Ormsby Donogh Real Estate File (1939–1977), BAHA.
Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.
Berkeley Tourist and Business Survey, 1924.
 “A Profile of the Elmwood: Trends and Counter-Trends in a Berkeley Neighborhood Commercial District” Joanna Callenbach, Geography 181 class paper, Spring 1978.
 ancestry.com
 “Notice of Intended Transfer” *Berkeley Gazette*, 5 June 1978.
 “Wright’s Garage Leads ZAB Agenda” by Rita Bhattacharjee, *Berkeley Daily Planet*, 6 Feb.2007.

20. Recorder

Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird,
 2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705
 22 October 2025

Additional Photographs.



Claremont Garage. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Claremont Garage, showing Italian Farmhouse-style penthouse. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Claremont Garage. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

Additional Photographs.

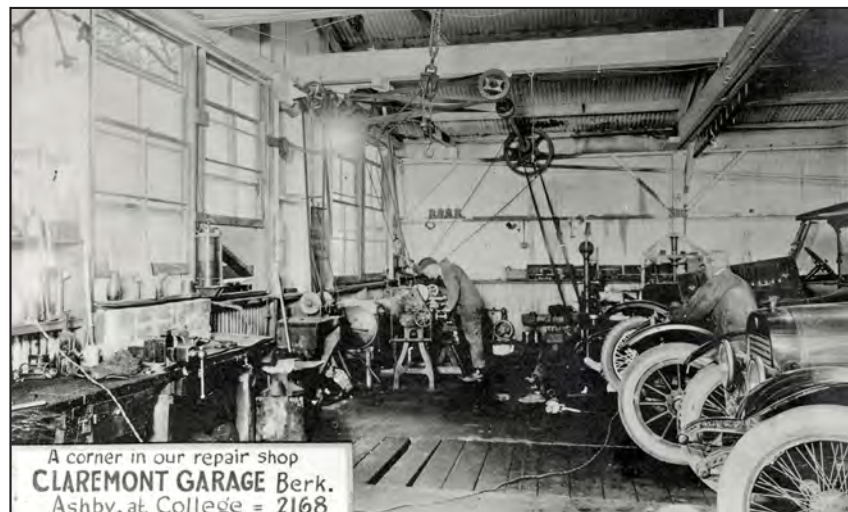
*Claremont Garage.
Betty Marvin, c.
1981*



*Claremont Garage.
Ormsby Donogh, 1939,
Donogh Real Estate
File, BAHA.*



*Claremont Garage repair shop
interior, late 1920s.
Photo-postcard courtesy
of Anthony Bruce,*



Additional Photographs.



William G. Farrell in Farrell's Elmwood Garage. Byron Bolfig, November 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.



Marian Farrell in Farrell's Elmwood Garage. Byron Bolfig, November 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.

WRITE IN INK

Application for Building Permit.

CLASS A-B AND C BUILDING

Application is hereby made to the Department of Buildings and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for permission to

Build a 2 1/2 story, C room class C building,

on the corner of Ashby street 75 feet of College Ave street

Side H Block 1 Tract 1

Being Lot No. 18,000

According to plans and specifications herewith submitted. All provisions of the Building Law will be complied with in the erection of said building whether specified herein or not.

Estimated entire cost of building \$18,000 Extreme height of building 34 ft.

Size of Lot 120 by 120 feet. Size of proposed building 120 ft. by 120 ft.

Building to be occupied as store & garage by (No.) — families.

	WALLS			PIERS OR COLUMNS		JOINTS			GIRDERS		
	HEIGHT	MATERIAL	THICKNESS	MATERIAL	SIZE	MATERIAL	SIZE	LONGEST SPAN	MATERIAL	SIZE	LONGEST SPAN
Footings		See Footing schedule									
Foundations		2" CONC. 12" deep & bottom									
Basement		See basement detail				wood 2x10	12" &	13'6" span			
1st story											
2nd story											
3rd story											
4th story											
5th story											
6th story											
7th story											
8th story											

Light shaft wall covering to be of none

Roof covered with tar & gravel Pitch flat

Chimneys of — lined with — any patent flues? —

Gas grate flues to be patent chimney or brick? no

Any dumb waiters or chutes? no Any elevator (freight or passenger) no

Cove brackets will be solid

Name of Owner of Ground Fred C. Koerber Res. Address 206 Koerber Bldg

Name of Owner of Building — Res. Address —

Name of Lessee of Building — Res. Address —

Name of Architect or Designer B. Reed Hardman Res. Address 1st Natl. Bk Bldg

Name of Builder Carlson W. Post Bus. Address 206 Koerber Bldg

I, Carlson W. Post, agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder Carlson W. Post

Address 206 Koerber Bldg

2629-31-33-35 Ashby 179

NOTE: This Permit expires one year from date unless sooner revoked by the City Council.

Date SEP 10 1925 Permit No. 22294

9/27 - 9/31 9/10 W

Berkeley Public Works Department West Berkeley

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Property No. 8
Koerber Building No. 5
2632 Ashby Avenue



Koerber Building No. 5, 2632 Ashby Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Address:** 2632, 2634, 2636, 2638 Ashby Avenue
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 052-1573-01400
(Claremont Tract, Block E, Lot 3)
Dimensions: 50 feet x 106.8 feet
Cross Streets: College Avenue and Benvenue Avenue
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 12062
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
 - a. **Building(s):** Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
 - b. **Landscape or Open Space:** No
 - c. **Historic Site:** No
 - d. **District:** Yes
 - e. **Other:** Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Koerber Building No. 5
Commonly Known Name: not known
6. **Date of Construction:** 1922, 1947 **Factual:** Yes
Source of Information: City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 11141, 5 January 1922; *Architect & Engineer*
7. **Architect:** John Olmquist, 5856 Trask Street, Oakland; Alben Froberg, Oakland
8. **Builder:** John Olmquist
9. **Style:** Shopfront
10. **Original Owners:** Fred C. Koerber, 2647 Ashby Avenue
Original Use: commercial (4 stores)
11. **Present Owner:** Gallardo Brothers LLC
Present Occupant: Focal Point (2638); Aveda Moon Shadow Salon (2634-36); Worthy Breath & Body (2632)
12. **Present Use:** commercial & vacant (3 stores)
Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** C-E, R-2A
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Excellent **Interior:** unknown **Grounds:** Ø
Has the property's exterior been altered? Yes

14. Description.

Built in 1922, this is a one-story wood-frame building containing four shops. Originally, large transoms filled half the space between the shopfronts and the minimal cornice. In 1947, Alben Froberg (architect of Oakland's noted Art-Deco Gray Shop) streamlined the façade with Carrara structural glass and steel Kawneer trim. Beige glass was used on the upper half of the façade, with dark blue framing the shops. All shops have traditional recessed entries and plate glass displays.

The integrity of the streamlined façade has

been slightly compromised by an awning over the westernmost shopfront, and the painting of its window framing and dark blue glass (all reversible). The streamlining of this building is one of the more successful remodelings in the district.

There is a brick workshop behind 2634, built in 1938 by building owner and cabinetmaker Henry Roehnert for his antique furniture restoration shop that lasted at this location for more than thirty years.

15. History.

This is the final commercial building that Fred Koerber built in the Elmwood commercial district. Soon after it was built the building housed M. Kubota's shoe repair, James D. Logan's U. C. Fruit Market, Darwin E. Woodworth and David Woodward's barber shop and laundry agency, and William P. Moran's Home Bake Shop. These were all necessary businesses for the surrounding residential neighborhoods. A bakery was a long-standing tenant in the easternmost shop at 2638 Ashby. Lane's Bakery, owned by J. Ado Lane, followed Moran's in 1937. This particular space lent itself so well to another bakery's use because Moran had it well-equipped, even to adding a brick oven in the rear. By 1964, Lane's was gone.

The longest running business in the building was Tail of the Yak, a gift shop unlike any other. It closely reflected the aesthetics and artistic taste of the owners, Alice Erb and Lauren MacIntosh. The shop was open for fifty-one years, from 1972 to 2023. Tail of the Yak was so unusual and atmospheric that it drew followers not only from Berkeley, but world-wide. According to an article in *Berkeleyside* about the shop's closing, Tail of the Yak was mentioned or featured in many publications, such as *Vogue* and the *New York Times*.

In 1947, architect Alben Froberg was commissioned by Marshall Steel, the then-owner of the building to modernize the façade, likely in anticipation of the opening of a branch of his cleaning business here. Marshall Steel remained at 2632 Ashby well into the 1960s.

In the 1930s and 1940s, nothing could revitalize the appearance of an older commercial building more than stainless steel and gleaming structural glass. Pigmented structural glass was developed in the United States around 1900. It really came into its own architecturally during the Art Deco/Streamline Moderne era due to its smooth, polished appearance and the fact that by the 1930s it was possible to produce it in a wide range of colors. The two most well known brands of pigmented structural glass were "Carrara" made by Pittsburgh Plate Glass Co., and "Vitrolite" made by the Vitrolite Company. Carrara seems to have been used on this building in both dark blue and the company's beige glass known as "suntan." The stainless steel trim was made by the Kawneer Company, a local firm whose West Berkeley factory is Landmark No. 104. Froberg was remodeling the Kawneer Building while he was working on Koerber Building No. 5.

16. Significance.

Koerber Building No. 5 is significant as the last building that Fred Koerber built in the Elmwood commercial district. Koerber was the first investor and created the nucleus of the district, paving the way for others. Out of an overall investment of ten structures, five remain.

The building is significant as the home of the world-renowned retail shop, Tail of the Yak, which remained successfully open for fifty-one years.

The building is significant for its architect-designed use of pigmented structural glass, a material that is no longer manufactured. The material boldly proclaims, “Mid-Century Modern.” It is one of the few remaining examples of its use in Berkeley and is the one remaining of five significant Modern makeovers in the Elmwood.

Lastly, due to its scale and its traditional shopfronts, Koerber Building No. 5 is a contributing structure in the district.

Features to Preserve.

- the pigmented structural glass on the façade
- the Kawneer stainless steel trim
- the shopfronts

17. Historic Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

Architectural Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

18. Is the property endangered? No

19. Bibliography.

Building Permit Application No. 11141, 5 January 1922; as well as alteration applications. Block books and Sanborn maps.

Directories.

Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.

Ormsby Donogh Real Estate File (1939–1977), BAHA.

Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.

Berkeley Tourist and Business Survey, 1924.

“A Profile of the Elmwood: Trends and Counter-Trends in a Berkeley Neighborhood Commercial District” Joanna Callenbach, Geography 181 class paper, Spring 1978.

ancestry.com

“Tail of the Yak, Elmwood Boutique Selling Rare and Lovely Crafts, Closing after 51 Years” by Joanne Furio, *Berkeleyside*, 2 May 2023.

“Pigmented Structural Glass,” *Wikipedia*.

20. Recorder

Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird, 2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

19 October 2025.

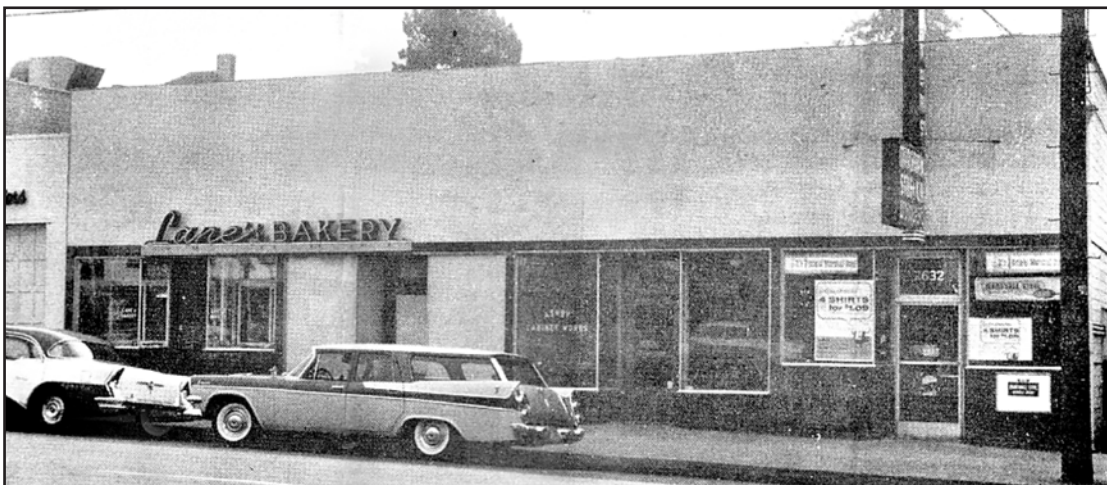
Additional Photographs.



*Koerber Building No. 5, 2632
Ashby Avenue.
Anthony Bruce, 1982.*



*Koerber Building No. 5, 2632
Ashby Avenue. Ormsby Donogh,
1939, Donogh Real Estate File,
BAHA.*



*Koerber Building No. 5, 2632 Ashby Avenue, showing the 1947 Carrera glass makeover.
Picture from a 1960 real estate listing, Donogh Real Estate File, BAHA.*

Additional Photographs.



*Tail of the Yak shopfront, 2632 Ashby Avenue.
Joanne Furio, 2023, Berkeleyside.*



*Tail of the Yak interior.
Joanne Furio, 2023, Berkeleyside.*



*Tail of the Yak, 2632 Ashby Avenue. Owners Lauren MacIntosh and Alice Erb.
Joanne Furio, 2023, Berkeleyside.*

APPLICATION FOR BUILDING PERMIT FRAME BUILDING

Application is hereby made to the Department of Buildings and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for permission to build a 1 story 4 room frame Stores corner on the South of Ashby street 90 feet east of Benvenue street. Side Being Lot No. Block Tract

According to plans and Specifications herewith submitted. All provisions of the Building Law will be complied with in the erection of said building whether specified herein or not.

Estimated entire cost of Building \$ 3477.00

Building to be occupied as Stores by (No.) families

Size of Lot by feet.

Size of proposed building 63 ft. by 60 ft. Extreme height of building 20'6" ft.

Height in clear of cellar ft. in. Height in clear of first story 14 ft. in.

Height in clear of second story ft. in. Height in clear of third story ft. in.

Foundation to be of (material) Concrete (Thickness) 12" inches, greatest height of foundation 12 inches.

Width of footings 15" inches.

Mud sills 2X6 X Main sills concrete floors Girders X Post

on piers X If piers are used, give size ly ft. on centers.

Size of underpinning X inches inches O. C. Size of studs in first story 2X6 inches inches O. C.

Size of studs in second story X inches inches O. C. Size of studs in third story X inches inches O. C.

Exterior wall covering to be of rustic Light shaft wall covering to be of.

All outside walls covered with singles or plaster will be close boarded.

First floor joists X inches inches on centers Longest span between supports ft.

Second floor joists X inches inches on centers Longest span between supports ft.

Third floor joists X inches inches on centers Longest span between supports ft.

Ceiling joists 2X4 X inches 16 inches on centers Longest span between supports ft.

Rafters 2X8 X inches 16 inches on centers Longest span between supports ft.

Roof covered with 7 or 8 in. shingles steep or flat? flat Pitch 1/2" to 1 ft.

Studs in bearing partitions will be same as outside walls of each story.

Chimneys of patent chimney with any patent flues?

Gas grate flues to be patent chimney or brick?

Any dumb waiters or chutes? Any elevator (freight or passenger)?

Cove brackets will be solid.

Name of Owner of Ground Fred C. Koser Residence Address

Name of Owner of Building " Residence Address

Name of Lessee of Building Residence Address

Name of Architect or Designer John Almqvist Residence Address 5856 Trask St. Oakland

Name of Builder John Almqvist Residence Address

I hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

26 52-34-56-58 Ashby Ave Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder John Almqvist
Address 5856 Trask St. Oakland

This Permit expires one year from date unless sooner revoked by the City Council.

Date Jan - 5 1922

Permit No. 11141

Berkheim Print

Bureau of Buildings and Inspections

APPLICATION FOR BUILDING PERMIT

Alterations and Repairs

WRITE IN INK

Application is hereby made to the Bureau of Building and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for Permission to ~~Build~~ Alter or Add to a group F Type II on one Story; 1 Brick Room Building

Located at 2634 Ashby Ave

All provisions of the Building Code will be complied with in the erection, alteration or repairing of said building whether specified herein or not

Value \$500.00

Building to be occupied as shop by Ashby Cabinet Works

Write Plainly Full Description of Work to Be Done

one story brick building with concrete floor
Foundations
Roof 4 ply 15 lb tar + gravel

Rockman

Name of Owner Henry Rockman Address 817 Mc Kinley Ave

Name of Architect or Designer _____ Address _____

Name of Engineer _____ Address _____

Name of Builder Birt & Coulter Address 2125 Alcatraz - 21

State License No. 8688- Post Control License No. _____

We
 I hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

Use District Class # Ordinance No. 2180 Birt & Coulter
 Signature of Owner, Agent or Builder

Fire Zone No. I Address _____

FOR DEPARTMENT USE ONLY

2634 ASHBY AVE. (2) Permit No. 44492

Number Street Page

Filed _____ Ready _____ Checked by HA & RNS Date Issued APR 11 1938

SEE PLANS

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 44492, 11 April 1938.



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 9
Gallardo Building
2642 Ashby Avenue



The Gallardo Building, 2642 Ashby Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Address:** 2642 Ashby Avenue
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 052-1568-01500
(Claremont Tract, Block E, western portion Lots 1 and 2)
Dimensions: 40 feet x 106.8 feet
Cross Streets: College Avenue and Benvenue Avenue
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 12963
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
a. Building(s): Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
b. Landscape or Open Space: No
c. Historic Site: No
d. District: Yes
e. Other: Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Gallardo Building
Commonly Known Name: not known
6. **Date of Construction:** 1950 **Factual:** Yes
Source of Information: City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 67641,
1 June 1950
7. **Architect:** none listed on application
8. **Builder:** Ed Sheffield
9. **Style:** Modern
10. **Original Owners:** Frank Gallardo
Original Use: commercial (1 store)
11. **Present Owner:** Gallardo James F, Violette P, & Gregory F Trs
Present Occupant: Berkeley Organic Market & Deli
12. **Present Use:** commercial (1 store)
Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** C-E
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Excellent **Interior:** unknown **Grounds:** Ø
Has the property's exterior been altered? No

14. Description.

This is one of three entirely new structures built in the district since 1928. One-story, it is built of basalt block with cement plaster covering the façade. The door and display window are divided into small square panes, and both are slightly recessed. A low planter box is in front of the window.

The original stark white of the austere building gave it a sophisticated Modern appearance, in

contrast to the surrounding district and to the often delicate, antique furniture seen through the show window. The building does not stand out in the same way today due to its warm coloring and the softening effect of the large awning.

15. History.

This site began as space for fuel storage when Fred Koerber built a shed on the property in 1912. In 1914 he built a small store building to be used by Carl Franz Martens and his sister Martha E. Martenz for their Elmwood Creamery. The Martens' had been original tenants in the westernmost of the three small shop buildings that Koerber built in 1910. The creamery was at 2631 Ashby Avenue, where their widowed mother Anna was a clerk. The Martens family lived nearby at 2320 Webster Street. The creamery sold milk, butter, and eggs. In 1928 the Martens' tore down the earlier shed and replaced it with a work shed constructed of hollow tile. This building, with the address of 2640 Ashby is still standing. Two years later, with quite a bit of remodeling, they added two new booths in the store itself. The Elmwood Creamery had an ice cream storage room in the back and the creamery may have become more of an ice cream parlor. A newspaper article from 1931 referred to Carl Martens as "a well-known Berkeley artist" when he did the Easter floral decorations at his church.

By 1934 the Elmwood Creamery had gone out of business, to be replaced by the East Bay Chinese Laundry. In 1943, an Emily V. Marshall converted the store to living quarters, as war-time housing (one of several Elmwood shops to be so converted). This is leading up to the fact that in April 1950 the property was pur-

chased by Frank and Emily Gallardo for their upholstery business, Gallardo Interiors, which was on College in the Romie Building. Their son Jim Gallardo, who was an active member of the family business, remembered that the Gallardos had wanted to use the charming 1914 building as the showroom, but were told by the City that it was a house and they could not use it for that purpose. Some remnants of the conversion must have been in evidence, even though the building had most recently housed an antique store. So, in June, Frank Gallardo took out a permit to build the present building. Jim, a Berkeley native, carried on the business after his parents retired. He was a "hands-on" businessman, making house calls, advising clients in his attractive and well-lit shop, and upholstering and repairing furniture. He was community-minded and "always lent his enthusiasm and expertise to many organizations" according to his obituary. He could be seen walking through the Elmwood district to the bank or to lunch. Jim Gallardo retired in 1997 and passed away in 2020.

16. Significance.

The Gallardo Building and its site are significant for being the location of two longtime Elmwood businesses that were necessary components of a complete neighborhood shopping district. The Elmwood Creamery was in business from 1911 to 1933 and Gallardo's Interiors, in the new building, from 1950 to 1997.

The site is also significant as an example of the drastic measures Berkeley citizens went to

in providing wartime housing in unusual, but workable, locations.

The Gallardo Building is significant as the one Mid-Century Modern building in the Elmwood commercial district. It is not a mid-century remodel, but is a new building, built at the mid century mark, designed with the Modern aesthetic of the period. It also conforms to the scale of other buildings in the district.

Features to Preserve.

- the simplicity of the flat stucco façade..
- the mullioned display windows and entry..
- the planter in front of the display window.
- the hint of a cornice,

17. Historic Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes
Architectural Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

18. Is the property endangered? No

19. Bibliography.

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 3819, 5 June 1914; as well as several other applications.

Block books and Sanborn maps

Directories.

Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.

Ormsby Donogh Real Estate File (1939–1977), BAHA.

Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.

Berkeley Tourist and Business Survey, 1924.

“A Profile of the Elmwood: Trends and Counter-Trends in a Berkeley Neighborhood Commercial District” Joanna Callenbach, Geography 181 class paper, Spring 1978.

ancestry.com

“Resurrection Festival Set,” *Oakland Tribune*, 4 April 1931.

Obituary for Carl F. Martens, *San Francisco Examiner*, 21 April 1938.

“James Frank Gallardo (December 15, 1925 – November 21, 2020)” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 27 November 2020.

20. Recorder

Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird, 2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

21 October 2025

Additional Photographs.

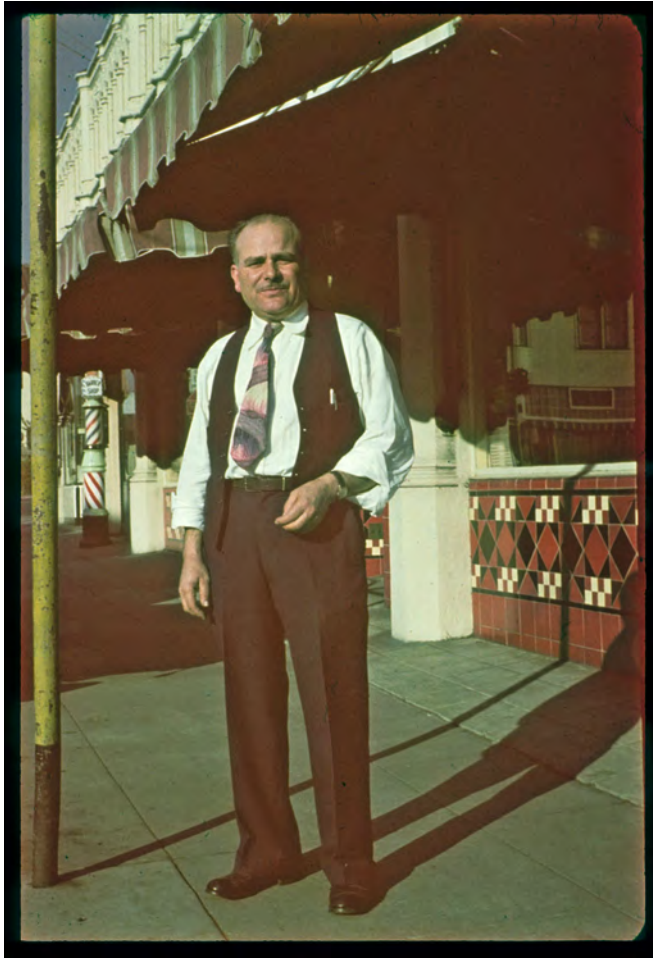


The Gallardo Building, 2642 Ashby Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 1982



The prior building at 2642 Ashby Avenue, built about 1914. Ormsby Donogh, 1939, Donogh Real Estate File, BAHA.

Additional Photographs.



Frank N. Gallardo in front of his shop on College Avenue in the Romie Building.

Byron Bolfig, 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.



*James Frank Gallardo.
From an online obituary.*

WRITE IN INK

Application for Building Permit

ALTERATION AND REPAIRS

Application is hereby made to the Department of Buildings and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for permission to

Alter 1 story shed same location on the South side of Adelphi street 75 near Monte College street.

Block Tract

All provisions of the Building Law will be complied with in the erection, alteration or repairing of said building, whether specified herein or not.

Estimated entire cost of alteration or repair \$2000.00

Building to be occupied as store by (No.) _____ families.

WRITE PLAINLY FULL DESCRIPTION OF WORK TO BE DONE
Giving Size of Material, Etc.

a small store - 15 feet front.
and 20 feet deep -
Studs - 2x4
16-in centers -
16 feet high -

Name of Owner of Ground Art Kreutz Residence Address 2645 Adelphi -

Name of Owner of Building Karl Hunter Residence Address 2631 Adelphi -

Name of Lessee of Building _____ Residence Address _____

Name of Architect or Designer _____ Business Address _____

Name of Builder _____ Business Address _____

I hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

Art C Kreutz
Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder
Address 2645 Adelphi

This Permit expires one year from date unless sooner revoked by the City Council.

Date JUN - 5 1914 Permit No. 3819

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 3819, 5 June 1914.

For the original store building on the site.

WRITE IN INK

Application for Building Permit.

CLASS A-B AND C BUILDING

Application is hereby made to the Department of Buildings and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for permission to

Build 1 story 1 room class B building.

on the South side of Holly Ave street 150 feet of 150 street.

Being Lot No. 150 Block Store No. 2612 Holly Ave in the rear Tract.

According to plans and Specifications herewith submitted. All provisions of the Building Law will be complied with in the erection of said building whether specified herein or not.

Estimated entire cost of building \$6,000.00 Extreme height of building 18'-0" ft.

Size of Lot 27.50 by 106.0 feet. Size of proposed building 47'-0" ft. by 24'-0" ft.

Building to be occupied as Cookshed by (No.) 1 families.

	WALLS			PIERS OR COLUMNS		JOISTS		GIRDERS			
	HEIGHT	MATERIAL	THICKNESS SIDE FRONT	MATERIAL	SIZE	MATERIAL	SIZE	LONGEST SPAN	MATERIAL	SIZE	LONGEST SPAN
Footings	1'-6"	Concrete	1'-8" 1'-8"						Wood	10"x14"	20'-10"
Foundations	1'-6"	concrete	1'-8" 1'-8"								
Basement											
1st story	12'-6"	Brick	8" 8"	brick	2'x2'						
2nd story				and	2'x2'						
3rd story				in corners							
4th story											
5th story											
6th story											
7th story											
8th story											

Light shaft wall covering to 1/2 of 1/2.

Roof covered with Tar paper Pitch 1/2.

Chimneys of Brick lined with any patent flues?

Gas grate flues to be patent chimney or brick patent chimneys.

Any dumb waiters or chutes? Any elevator (freight or passenger)?

Cove brackets will be solid.

Name of Owner of Ground Martins & M. E. Martins Res. Address 2320 Webster Str.

Name of Owner of Building do Res. Address do

Name of Lessee of Building do Res. Address do

Name of Architect or Designer Henry Loeschke Bus. Address 2533 California Str.

Name of Builder Henry Loeschke Bus. Address do

I hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

2540 II-666 12197 Henry Loeschke
Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder.
Address 2533 California Str.

NOTE This Permit expires one year from date unless sooner revoked by the City Council.

Date October 29 1928 Permit No. 31785

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 31785, 29 October 1928.

For the hollow tile structure in the rear.



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 10
Scott Building
2960 College Avenue



The Scott Building, 2960 College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Address:** 2960 College Avenue
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 052-1573-00100
(Claremont Tract, Block E, eastern portion of Lot 1)
Dimensions: 57 feet x 103 feet
Cross Streets: Webster Street and Ashby Avenue
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 11932
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
a. Building(s): Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
b. Landscape or Open Space: Yes
c. Historic Site: No
d. District: Yes
e. Other: Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Scott Building
Commonly Known Name: not known
6. **Date of Construction:** 1910 **Factual:** Yes
Source of Information: City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 535, 28 March 1910
7. **Architect:** owner (B. Thomas Scott, 1904 Encinal Avenue, Alameda)
8. **Builder:** William Dufour, 2326 Santa Clara Avenue, Alameda
9. **Style:** Post-Modern/Storefont
10. **Original Owners:** Bert Thomas Scott, 1904 Encinal Avenue, Alameda
Original Use: commercial (5 stores)
11. **Present Owner:** Edward M and Virginia B Plant Trs and Brian Neil Goodhue (2644. 2648. 2660 Ashby); Peter Y Lee Tr (2646 Ashby). [4 condominiums]
Present Occupant: Cafenated Coffee Co.; Great Kutz; Thrift Shop Berkeley Humane
12. **Present Use:** commercial (3 stores)
Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** C-E
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Excellent **Interior:** unknown **Grounds:** Excellent
Has the property's exterior been altered? Yes

14. Description.

The Scott Building was built in 1910, making it one of the earliest buildings in the district. However, a major fire in December 1988 destroyed much of the building's interior and the corner section, which had been a drugstore since 1910. The corner was rebuilt in a stark, boxy Post-Modern style in keeping with the stark, boxy appearance of the original building.

The Ashby Avenue frontage consisted of five bays plus the corner entrance. The western three bays with their traditional storefronts look much as they did in a 1939 photo, with tall transom windows. The space between the transoms and the minimal cornice is cement plaster, flat and unadorned. There are at least two entrances paved with small tile.

The new section, which includes all the College Avenue frontage and about two bays worth along Ashby, was rebuilt as a cafe. The boxy look was retained. The corner entry was "pushed" into the building and a boxy tower form was built at a canted angle to the adjoining walls. The tower was really a clock tower, with a clock face near the curved top, a neighborhood convenience that was removed

in 2023. The curve was also removed in that remodel, which included a complete redesign of the interior. With the corner of the building removed, there is a lively forecourt with plantings and outdoor seating.

The three windows along College and the one new one on Ashby are designed as identical vertical units. Slightly recessed, they are composed of a flat, dark gray-painted rectangular area at the top which is matched by the dark gray-painted bulkhead designed as a cyma curve. In between are the tall sliding windows with bronzed frames. The windows are shaded by dark gray fixed-in-place awnings that are attached to the building at their sides by thin metal half-circles.

The main entrance door at the base of the tower is set within an unpainted wood frame. There is a large-divided light transom. Above that is a recessed panel with the name of the business. Secondary doors lead to the forecourt which are the same height as the main doors, but the transoms are lower. The new section was recently Tuscan red and yellow-ochre; since the 2023 remodel, it is dark gray and beige.

15. History.

In 1910, Bert Thomas "Bud" Scott, a real estate investor living in Alameda, built this corner building with space for five shops. He engaged William Dufour, an Alameda contractor who later built the Strand Theater next door, to construct the building. Fred Koerber's three finished buildings—and with the next phase underway—may have been the impetus for Scott to invest in this growing commercial corner.

In March 1911, not too long after the building was completed, Bert Scott sold the property to the mother-and-daughters investment team of Carolyn Litsch, Emma Klumpp, and Elizabeth Etter. Carolyn and her husband Frank were California pioneers who opened a general store

in Shasta City. They did so well that they retired early to San Francisco, having "amassed a comfortable fortune." The three women also purchased Lot 2 next door on College Avenue from the niece of Mark Ashby whose property this all was. The women built the Strand Theater in 1914 on that parcel.

Meanwhile, Rolla Dane Fuller, a 1902 graduate of the University of California School of Pharmacy, saw the beautiful new corner building with its highly visible corner space, and moved his pharmacy from one of Fred Koerber's 1909 buildings on Ashby into the Scott Building. During the first years of business, Dane Fuller (he preferred his middle name)

was in partnership with his father-in-law John Francis Croone. Dane married Estelle Croone at the family home on Union Street in 1904. The Fuller and Croone pharmacy was named the College Avenue Pharmacy, which is how it was known throughout its long history.

In 1924, Fuller leased the pharmacy to George F. Stier, so that he could travel for a wholesale drug company. Stier, who lived at 1 Claremont Crescent, died less than two years later, and the pharmacy was then turned over to Louis J. Fischl. By this time Fuller owned the building. He may have purchased the property soon after Caroline Litsch died in 1922. In 1935, Fuller commissioned architect Harvey Slocombe to modernize the building. Gone were the cornice and decorative pilasters. The upper half of the Ashby and College façades were stuccoed over with a smooth finish, replacing the siding which was similar in style to that of the Koerber Building. In December 1938, Rolla Dane Fuller died at his summer home at Castella. Estelle Fuller continued to own the building until her death in 1958. It was sold the following year to Elsie and Wallace Granberg. Wallace, a pharmacist, ran the College Avenue Pharmacy for sixteen years. The pharmacy was then owned and run by pharmacist Charles Carter from 1975 until 1982.

With the large pharmacy space free, the Carvansary coffee shop, which had been in the Bischoff Building since about 1970, expanded

into the space in 1984. The Caravansary was gone by the time fire destroyed the corner and severely damaged the rest of the building on December 15, 1988. Elmwood Espresso had taken over the corner space. The western three fifths of the building were restored, but the corner needed to be rebuilt.

For Espresso Roma (an offshoot of the popular Cafe Strada at College and Bancroft) the architectural firm of Edgar+Thieme (Mark Edgar and Mark Thieme) designed what was, in effect, a new building in 1989. Out of the ashes rose one of the handful of Post Modern buildings in Berkeley. Espresso Roma was Post Modern with an Italian bent. The corner was cut away to create an entrance courtyard with places to sit. Rising above, was a stepped clock tower which contained the main entrance. The exterior stucco was washed with a peach tint and the base of the building was faced in dark brown tile. It became—at the invitation of the operators—a place frequented by customers and their laptops lingering over a cup of coffee.

In 2022, Espresso Roma was replaced by another local cafe business, Cafenated. Before moving in, the architectural firm of HolderParlette was commissioned to bring the cafe into the 21st Century. The clock tower was streamlined and the clock face removed, and the exterior painted warm gray, minus the brown tile. The interior was changed from a warm-colored Italian cafe into a sleek and stylish coffeehouse.

16. Significance.

The Scott Building is significant in the Elmwood commercial district for the length of time that its corner businesses remained: a pharmacy for seventy years and a cafe for forty-five years. Both business types served the surrounding community well.

The Scott Building is significant as one of the earliest Elmwood commercial buildings.

The Scott Building is also significant for the remodeling of the corner section of the building

in 1989. Espresso Roma, with their architects Mark Thieme and Mark Edgar, created one of Berkeley's few Post Modern designs. In keeping with the theme of the cafe, this Post Modern building incorporated vernacular Italian imagery, making it a business-specific rendition of Post Modern. Even with the Italian flavor gone, the building still has a bold Post Modern presence on a strategic corner of the Elmwood commercial district.

Features to Preserve.

- the tower, courtyard, entries, windows, fixed awnings, and stucco exterior—of the corner two fifths of the building
- traditional shopfronts with tile bulkheads, tile paving, and transoms—of the three fifth along Ashby

17. Historic Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

Architectural Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

18. Is the property endangered? No

19. Bibliography.

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 535, 28 March 1910; as well as several other applications fo alterations.

Block books and Sanborn maps

Directories.

Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.

Ormsby Donogh Real Estate File (1939–1977), BAHA.

Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.

Berkeley Tourist and Business Survey, 1924.

“A Profile of the Elmwood: Trends and Counter-Trends in a Berkeley Neighborhood Commercial District” Joanna Callenbach, Geography 181 class paper, Spring 1978.

ancestry.com

“Pioneer Woman of Shasta Passes Away in San Francisco,” *Redding Record Searchlight*, 11 November 1922

“Rolla D. Fuller Dies at Castella” *Chico Enterprise*, 5 December 1938.

“Cafenated to Open in Espresso Roma’s Former College Ave. Space” by Eve Batey, *Berkeleyside*, 9 February 2022.

“Cafenated Transforms a 1980s-Era Berkeley Coffee Shop into an All-Day Cafe” by Brock Keeling, *Berkeleyside*, 4 May 2023.

Obituary for Carl F. Martens, *San Francisco Examiner*, 21 April 1938.

“James Frank Gallardo (December 15, 1925 – November 21, 2020)” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 27 November 20.

20. Recorder

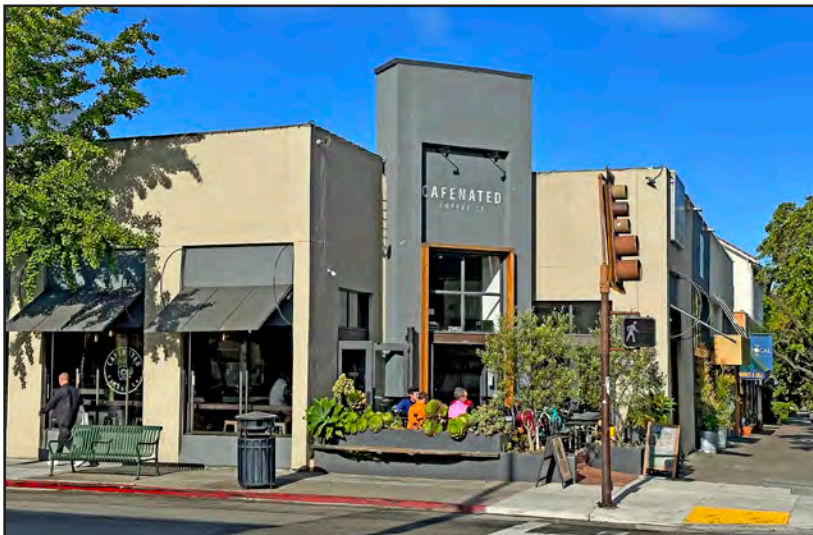
Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird, 2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

26 October 2025

Additional Photographs.



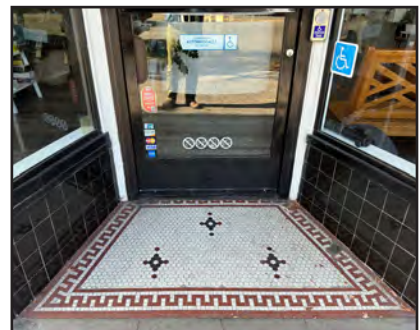
A portion of the College Avenue frontage of the new part of the Scott Building. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



The corner of the new part of the Scott Building showing landscaped sitting area. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Bottom left: The original undamaged section of the Scott Building facing Ashby Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



An original—or at least early—mosaic tile shopfront entrance in the 1910 section of the Scott Building. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

Additional Photographs.



*The Scott Building, showing the mass of the 1910 structure intact before the 1988 fire.
Anthony Bruce, 1982,*



*The Scott Building, viewed from Ashby Avenue looking east to College.
Ormsby Donogh, 1939, Donogh Real Estate File, BAHA.,*

Additional Photographs.



The Scott Building, showing the College Avenue Pharmacy. Byron Bolfig, 1947, Berkeley Historical Society..



The Scott Building, showing the interior of the College Avenue Pharmacy. Byron Bolfig, 1947, Berkeley Historical Society..

Additional Photographs.



*Espresso Roma in the Scott Building.
From Mark Thieme Architect, Inc. website.*



*Espresso Roma in the Scott Building. Interior.
From Mark Thieme Architect, Inc. website.*



*Espresso Roma in the Scott Building. The forecourt and clock tower.
From Mark Thieme Architect, Inc. website.*

Additional Photographs.



Espresso Roma in the Scott Building, after it had been unsuccessfully painted Tuscan Red and yellow. Stuart Luman, 2022.



Cafenated in the Scott Building. Interior. From Cafenated Coffee Co. website.

Additional Photographs.



Entrance to Cafenated. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Cafenated forecourt. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

APPLICATION FOR BUILDING PERMIT, No. 535

FRAME BUILDING

Application is hereby made to the Building Inspector of the City of Berkeley for permission to build a

One story 5 stories frame 12 bldg.
 corner on the N.E. of Ashby St and head of Alameda 11.3 feet on lot
 Ashby St and 57th St. Estimated entire cost of building \$ 5000.00
 Building to be occupied as Store by (New) (existing)
 Size of Lot 57 by 123 feet.
 Size of proposed building 99 ft. by 97 ft. Extreme height of building 24 ft.
 Height in clear of cellar 6 ft. 6 in. Height in clear of first story 12 ft. 6 in.
 Height in clear of second story — ft. — in. Height in clear of third story — ft. — in.
 Height in clear of fourth story — ft. — in. Height in clear of fifth story — ft. — in.
 Foundation to be of (material) concrete (Thickness) 13 inches, greatest height of foundation 7-6 inches. Width of footings 13 inches.
 Mud sills 3 by 6 Main Sills — by — Girders 6 by 6 Post on piers 6 by 6 If piers are used, give size 15 by — ft. on centers.
 Size of underpinning — by — inches — inches on centers.
 Size of studs in first story 2 by 6 inches 16 inches on centers.
 Size of studs in second story — by — inches — inches on centers.
 Size of studs in third story — by — inches — inches on centers.
 Size of studs in fourth story — by — inches — inches on centers.
 Size of studs in fifth story — by — inches — inches on centers.
 Exterior wall covering to be of 1 1/2" x 8" material Light shaft wall covering to be of —
 First floor joists 2 by 10 inches 16 inches on centers. Longest span between supports 10 ft.
 Second floor joists — by — inches — inches on centers. Longest span between supports — ft.
 Third floor joists — by — inches — inches on centers. Longest span between supports — ft.
 Fourth floor joists — by — inches — inches on centers. Longest span between supports — ft.
 Fifth floor joists — by — inches — inches on centers. Longest span between supports — ft.
 Rafters 2 by 6 inches 16 inches on centers. Longest span between supports 12 ft.
 Roof covered with felt 20 lb. 19 lb. Steep or flat? — Pitch 7/12 in 57 ft.
 Are studs in bearing partitions to be same as outside walls of each story? Yes Give size 2 by 6
 Chimneys of patent chimney, lined with — any patent flues?
 Gas grate flues to be patent chimney or brick?
 Any dumb waiters or chutes? No Any elevator (freight or passenger)?

If exterior walls are to be covered with shingles, walls must be close boarded: up and down boarding prohibited.

Cover brackets must be solid.

Name of Architect R. H. H. 1375 Hart Address General Association of Architects, Ltd.
 Name of Owner B. J. Hoatt Address General Association of Architects, Ltd.
 Name of Builder Louis Nicholas Address 226 Auto Store Ave, Alameda, Cal.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

COUNTY OF ALAMEDA

CITY OF BERKELEY

The undersigned, being first duly sworn upon oath, deposes and says that the statements herein contained are true and correct, and hereby agrees to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk place by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

Subscribed and sworn to before me

1910
 Frank A. Lawrence
 Clerk

Louis Nicholas
 Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder.
 Address 226 Auto Store Ave
 Alameda, Cal.

Building Inspector must be notified when building is ready for lathing, or before interior walls are covered.

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 535, 28 March 1910

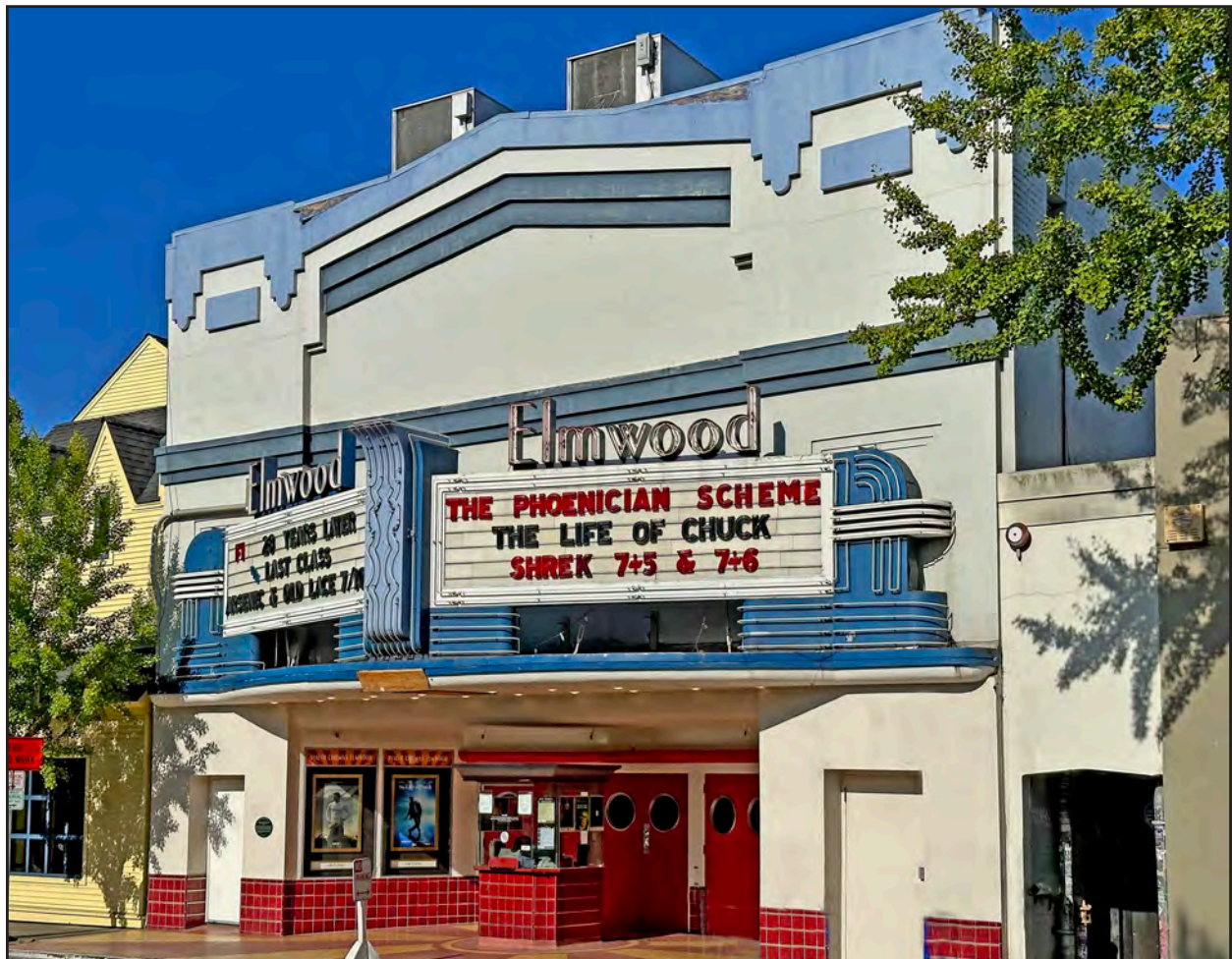


Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 11
Strand Theater
2966 College Avenue
City of Berkeley Landmark No. 58



The Strand Theater Building, 2966 College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Address:** 2966 College Avenue
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 052-1573-00200
(Claremont Tract, Block E, Lot 2)
Dimensions: 50 feet x 103 feet
Cross Streets: Ashby Avenue and Webster Street
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** Yes
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 12051
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
a. Building(s): Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
b. Landscape or Open Space: Yes
c. Historic Site: No
d. District: Yes
e. Other: Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Strand Theater; Elmwood Theater
Commonly Known Name: Rialto Cinemas Elmwood; "The Elmwood"
6. **Date of Construction:** 1914 **Factual:** Yes
Source of Information: City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 3865, 20 June 1914; City of Berkeley Application for Alteration Permit No. 58738, 2 March 1946.
7. **Architect:** William Dufour, 2326 Santa Clara Avenue, Alameda
8. **Builder:** David M. Etter, 843 Laurel, Alameda
9. **Style:** Viennese Secession/Streamlined Moderne
10. **Original Owners:** Caroline Litch, Emma Klumpp, Elizabeth Etter; Beach & Krahn, lease
Original Use: commercial (motion picture theater)
11. **Present Owner:** Elmwood Theater Foundation
Present Occupant: Rialto Cinemas Elmwood
12. **Present Use:** commercial (motion picture theater)
Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** C-E
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Excellent **Interior:** unknown **Grounds:** Ø
Has the property's exterior been altered? Yes

14. Description.

Built in 1914, this is a brick, two-story motion-picture theater with the street façade surfaced with cement plaster, painted light gray and light blue. The façade was altered partly from the original design when it was streamlined in 1947. The parapet rises in the center as a shallow chevron; side sections are treated as wide pilasters with raised geometric pendants at the top and the three sets of entry doors set back between them at the rear of the ground level forecourt.

The building has a base of maroon glazed tile which is repeated on the free-standing ticket booth in the center of the forecourt. The upper half of the booth is glass and it is topped by a robust cornice. The forecourt is paved with sun rays of alternating gold and maroon terrazzo

with radiates outward from the ticket both all the way to the curb.

The inward-angled walls of the forecourt are adorned with large, glass poster cases framed in metal (two on each wall). Until recent years, a horizontal band above each case gave the name “Elmwood” preceded by the theater’s long-time logo, a tilted crown. Service/emergency doors are discreetly set at each side of the façade.

The marquee is a curved, rounded streamlined slab supporting two modern plastic signboards, angled for wide visibility. Each is topped by neon delineating “Elmwood” in late-Art Deco lettering, a first-time visible identification amenity added sometime after the 1994 re-opening. There is a distinctive center prow.

15. History.

Elizabeth T. White, the niece of Mark Ashby whose property this all was, sold Lot 2 to a mother-and-daughters investment team of Carolyn Litsch, Emma Klumpp, and Elizabeth Etter. Carolyn and her husband Frank were California pioneers who opened a general store in Shasta City. They did so well that they retired early to San Francisco, having “amassed a comfortable fortune.” The women built the Strand Theater in 1914 on Lot 2.

The Strand Theater opened in December 1914, a near-pioneer business in the Elmwood District where the other buildings on the block were three houses and a wooden corner drugstore. This was one of three neighborhood theaters operated by the Beach & Krahn Amusement Company in South Berkeley and North Oakland, beginning with the storefront Lorin Theater on Adeline Street in 1908

By 1914, movie audiences—and building codes—had outgrown storefront theaters and even in a new neighborhood like the Elmwood, Beach & Krahn went straight to a large fireproof movie palace. This was the same year that the

California Theater (T&D) was built downtown. The Strand is the least altered of these two oldest surviving Berkeley movie theaters.

The Strand and the T&D had both architects and opening dates in common. Alameda architect Albert W. Cornelius designed the T&D, and, although builder William Dufour is shown as the designer on the Strand’s building permit, Cornelius had already designed a movie theater in Alameda that was identical, albeit larger.

The heavy stucco detailing of the Strand suggests the Viennese Secession style that John Hudson Thomas was working in locally at the time. That is what gives the stripped-down Strand something of a Zig-Zag Moderne look today. The façade originally had a heavy, dented and bracketed cornice below the chevron, a big rounded arch over the entrance, and ornamental escutcheons supporting an arched, carriage-entrance type marquee. The large entry arch was a trademark of movie theaters designed in the 1910s.

Beach & Krahn believed that neighborhood theaters had a responsibility to the community,

to provide clean, quality family entertainment: “Every foot of film has had personal inspection and censorship before being shown.” and “You never hear a jazz tune played while real sentiment is being shown.” As the neighborhood grew into greater Berkeley and Oakland, the Beach-Krahn theaters were absorbed by the Golden State chain.

The Strand closed during World War II, and reopened in 1947 after a major streamlining remodel and refurbishment by architect Alexander A. Cantin, who had designed the Orinda Theater in 1941. The theater was reborn as the “Elmwood.” “Berkeley’s first postwar motion picture house,” the advertisements read, “a show house for outstanding foreign films.” Thus, it weathered the coming of television in the 1950s, and helped set the present artistic tone of the Elmwood district.

In December 1988, tragedy struck the Elmwood when it received \$160,000 worth of damage during the large fire at the next-door Scott Building. The owner of the damaged theater was tempted to sell the property to a develop-

er. Businesses in the district suffered loss of customers without the draw of a thriving movie theater. Business owner Burl Willis rallied merchants and neighbors, and the Save the Elmwood Theatre Committee was formed about two years after the fire, which gained the support of the City. The non-profit Elmwood Theater Foundation was then created and was able to buy the property in 1992 with the help of a loan from the City. The City Council created a special assessment district around the theater to enable the paying off of the loan. The Foundation found an operator for the business, received an additional loan from the City to help cover rehabilitation costs, and the Elmwood Theater held its grand opening on October 22, 1994. The Elmwood merchants breathed a sigh of relief as their businesses returned to normal.

Today, the Elmwood is the only operating motion picture theater in Berkeley, a city that not so long ago prided itself on its large number of movie theaters,

Much of the history and description was taken from the 1981 landmark application written by Betty Marvin.

16. Significance.

The Strand/Elmwood motion picture theater is significant both architecturally and culturally. It was designed by movie theater architect, A. W. Cornelius who designed theaters in California during the 1910s. This was the period when storefront nickelodeons were giving way to substantial, fireproof, and architecturally significant theaters on par with the legitimate theaters of the day.

Cornelius designed the Strand in a mix of Classical and Viennese Secession elements. With the 1947 remodel, the theater emerged as a successful fusion of Viennese Secession and Streamline Moderne, unique in Berkeley.

Alexander A. Cantin, architect of the 1947 remodel, has long been recognized as a master

of movie theater design in the era following that in which Cornelius had worked. Locally, he designed the much-beloved Orinda Theater in 1941.

The Strand was built in the Elmwood District during the first wave of development, becoming an anchor for the business district when construction resumed after World War I. When the theater was closed for several years after the 1988 fire damage, its importance as the anchor and as a major catalyst for business was apparent. The theater remains today as an important anchor and as a component of the small town “Main Street” atmosphere of the Elmwood Commercial District.

Features to Preserve.

- the façade with its Viennese Secession detailing
- the maroon glazed tile.
- the free-standing ticket booth
- the marquee.
- the terrazzo paving
- the entrance doors to the theater
- the metal-framed poster holders

17. **Historic Value—** City: Yes **Neighborhood: Yes**
Architectural Value— City: Yes **Neighborhood: Yes**

18. **Is the property endangered?** No

19. Bibliography.

Architect & Engineer, February 1915, pp 50–60.

Building Permit Application #3865, 20 June 1914; as well as alteration applications.

State Historic Resources Inventory, 1978

City of Berkeley Landmark Application, Betty Marvin, 28 September 1981.

City directories, 1900–1922.

Block books and Sanborn maps

Berkeley Courier (on Beach-Krahn), Feb. 24, Sept. 30, Oct. 7 and 14, 1922.

Berkeley Gazette, December 7 and 17, 1914; ads: Jan. 26, 1921; May 20 and June 25, 1947; Oct, 15, 1980: “The Elmwood’s Theater District.”

Oakland Tribune, 2 March 1990, “Reel Suspense;” 8 March 1990, “Elmwood Buyer;” 221 August 1991, “Curtain Going Up;” 9 August 1991, “Sequel for the Elmwood;” 25 May 1993, “Theater Plan for Berkeley.”

Daily Californian, 1 May 1991, “Berkeley Building to Remain a Movie Theater, City Rules;” 18 Dec. 1991, “Elmwood Theater to Blossom Anew;” 23 July 1993, “Abandoned Elmwood Theater Soon to Open;” 25 Oct. 1994, “Grand Opening of Elmwood Theater.”

Express, 30 Sept. 1994, “The Return of the Elmwood Theater.”

San Francisco Chronicle, 21 August 1991, “Berkeley Landmark to be Restored.”

Berkeley Gazette, 6 July 1914, “Building Record is Big Figure.”

20. Recorder Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird, 2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705
 September 2025

Additional Photographs.



The Strand (Elmwood). Anthony Bruce, 2020



The Strand (Elmwood). Anthony Bruce, 2025.



*The Strand (Elmwood).
Anthony Bruce, 1982.*



The Strand (Elmwood). Anthony Bruce, 2025.



The Strand (Elmwood). Jack Tilmany Collection.

Additional Photographs.



The Strand (Elmwood). Byron Bolfig, 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.



The Strand (Elmwood). Byron Bolfig, 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.



The Strand (Elmwood): ticket booth. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

WRITE IN INK

Application for Building Permit.

CLASS A-B AND C BUILDINGS

Application is hereby made to the Department of Buildings and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for permission to build a One story improvement class B building.

on the Four College Avenue 5.7 Acres Appl. 11/1/14 street.

Block 2 Block 21 Lebanon Tract.

According to plans and specifications herewith submitted. All provisions of the Building Law will be complied with in the erection of said building whether specified herein or not.

Estimated value of building \$12,000 Extreme height of building 5.4 ft.

Site of lot 5.8 by 10.3 feet. Area of proposed building 45 ft. by 10.3 ft.

Building to be occupied as Maternity School by (No.) 1 families.

	WALLS			PIERS OR COLUMNS		DOORS			WINDOWS		
	HEIGHT	MATERIAL	THICKNESS	MATERIAL	SIZE	MATERIAL	SIZE	LOWEST SPOT	MATERIAL	SIZE	LOWEST SPOT
Foundation	2'-0"	Concrete	12"	Concrete	12"						
Exterior	11'-0"	Concrete	12"								
Roof	2'-0"	Truck	12"	Truck	12"						
1st story	8'-6"	Truck	12"	Truck	12"						
2nd story											
3rd story											
4th story											
5th story											
6th story											
7th story											
8th story											

Light glass will covering to be of Lead & glass

Roof covered with Lead & glass Pitch 12 to 12

Outsides of Lead & glass lined with Lead & glass any patent floor?

One green floor to be put in chimney or brick?

Any flush water or closet? None Any elevator (freight or passenger)?

Cave openings will be filled.

Name of Owner of Ground Lebanon School, Leona K. Smith and Elizabeth B. Smith Res. Address 911 Northside St. S.F. Cal.

Name of Owner of Building Lebanon School Res. Address 911 Northside St. S.F. Cal.

Name of Lessee of Building Lebanon School Res. Address 911 Northside St. S.F. Cal.

Name of Architect Lebanon School Res. Address 911 Northside St. S.F. Cal.

Name of Builder Lebanon School Res. Address 911 Northside St. S.F. Cal.

I hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

+ Lebanon School
Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder.

Address 843 Leavenworth

NOTE: This Permit expires one year from date unless sooner revoked by the City Council.

Date JUN 20 1914 Permit No. 3865

Berkeley Print  Berkeley

CITY OF BERKELEY
Building Department

APPLICATION FOR BUILDING PERMIT
Additions, Alterations and Repairs

Application is hereby made to the Building Department of the City of Berkeley for Permission to Add to, or Alter, or Repair a group A, Type III, 1 Story, Room Building.

Located at College Ave - West side - South of Ashby

All provisions of the Building Code will be complied with in the erection, alteration or repairing of said building whether specified herein or not.

Estimated Cost \$9000.00

Building ^{is} ~~to be~~ occupied as Theatre by _____

WRITE PLAINLY FULL DESCRIPTION OF WORK TO BE DONE
Small sketches may be drawn on the back of this sheet

Extend North Stairs to Street for exit.
New Projection Room & 2 sprinklers
New Toilets & Rest Rooms on Mezzanine & new stairs to Mezzanine
Revise platforms on rear part of Balcony
Take off exterior cornice.
Gas fired furnace to replace oil.
Remove wood raincoat & see plans.

Name of Owner Golden State Theatre & Realty Corp. Address 795 Market St. San Francisco.
A.A. CANTIN

Name of Architect or Designer A. Madeline CANTIN Address 704

Name of Engineer _____ Address _____

Name of Builder W.M. Cunningham Address St. Regis Hotel - 4th St.

State License No. _____ Pest Control License No. _____

We
I hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley and/or its employees, against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

Use District Class. _____ Ordinance No. A.A. Cantin Signature of Owner, Agent or Builder.
Fire Zone No. (1) Address _____

FOR DEPARTMENT USE ONLY

2966 College Permit No. 58738
Number Street Page Date Issued MAR -2 1946

City of Berkeley Application for Alteration Permit No. 58738, 2 March 1946.



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 12
Elmwood Village
2974 College Avenue



Elmwood Village, 2974 College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Address:** 2974–2980 College Avenue
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 052–1573–00300
(Dutard Property, Block A, Lot 6)
Dimensions: 50 feet x 144.6 feet
Cross Streets: Ashby Avenue and Webster Street
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** Yes, 9 June 1978.
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 12052
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
a. Building(s): Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
b. Landscape or Open Space: Yes
c. Historic Site: No
d. District: Yes
e. Other: Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Elmwood Village
Commonly Known Name: Elmwood Village
6. **Date of Construction:** 1983 **Factual:** Yes
Source of Information: newspaper articles
7. **Architect:** Peter Gray Scott (The Ratcliff Architects)
8. **Builder:** Steven Oliver & Co., Richmond
9. **Style:** Post-Modern or New England Seaside Village
10. **Original Owners:** Steven Oliver, John Millar, and -- Komes
Original Use: commercial (offices and shops)
11. **Present Owner:** Kazerooni Homayoon & Shoji Audrey, 2924 Russell Street 94705
[11 condominiums]
Present Occupant: vacant; Elmwood Copy; Montclair Optical
12. **Present Use:** residential and commercial
Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** C-E
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Excellent **Interior:** unknown **Grounds:** Excellent
Has the property's exterior been altered? Minimally

14. Description.

The Elmwood Village complex has the construction date of 1982, but some of the framing dates from the original structures built in 1908 and 1916. Elmwood Village is a rambling three-story wood-frame building, reminiscent in style to a New England seaside village, although it also could be considered Post-Modern. The building's clapboard exterior has been painted various shades of yellow since construction was completed in 1983.

The street façade is mostly symmetrical with a center entrance arch flanked by two shopfronts. These shopfronts echo the two shopfronts that were once in the same spots. They share the footprints and may also share the structural framing. Each has divided light windows; the shop on the left has three, while that on the right has only the larger center window. Each is shielded by a narrow roof overhang, acting a bit like an awning. Above the lefthand shop is a broad expanse of parapet. On the right, the front wall rises to two stories topped by a ga-

ble roof with the ridgeline parallel to the street. The roof is punctuated by two gabled dormer windows.

Beyond the entrance (to the depth of the two shopfronts) is a three-story section with a prominent gable-end facing the street. There is a pair of windows within the gable. A cross gable extends this section, directly behind the dormered gable, to the north edge of the property. It does not extend to the south edge.

The entrance arch leads to a high, square vestibule with doors to the two shopfronts on either side. A second arch leads into the rest of the complex. A path paved with aggregate turns to the left, and then to the right, and meanders far into the complex. Immediately after the arch there is, on the right, a stairway leading to the second floor. Straight ahead is the largest store in the complex. Windows on the south and west walls of the shop look out onto the pathway which is in the open at this point.

15. History.

In August 1906, Mrs. Elijah Dutard of San Francisco sold her property at Webster and College to Mrs. James B. (Lida) Hume, the "prominent Berkeley clubwoman," and Helen Wright of Sacramento. City Engineer W. F. McClure subdivided it into three blocks between Regent and College on the north side of Webster. The women engaged Fred E. Reed, local real estate agent, to market the lots.

There were three building lots fronting on College Avenue, and the first house to be built was the Thomas H. Nevin House designed by Clarence Casebolt Dakin in 1908. Nevin ran a meat market on Bancroft Way. In 1916, after the Strand Theater was built next door, Nevin had the family home raised and a one-story shop building with space for two shops constructed underneath. The façade of the shop build-

ing was stucco with geometric ornamentation in the loosely Viennese Secession style of the 1910s. Above, the house was set back from the street with a large rooftop garden created with plants in pots and tubs. An elaborate pergola ran along the street side of the "garden." The Nevin property was the most unusual in the Elmwood district! The Nevins lived in the house and owned the property until 1949.

In 1965, a short-lived experimental theater and performance art venue opened in the shop space. The Open Theater is now noted as the site of the first publicly advertised Big Brother and The Holding Company show. The theater closed in March 1966.

After sitting empty, Michael Liebert, who had long thought that Berkeley needed a professional resident theater company, rented the

space in early 1968. The Berkeley Repertory Theatre opened on April 24, 1968 with a production of *Woyzeck*. The group slowly built a following, eventually bought the building, and, within ten years, outgrew the space. After moving to a new theater on Addison Street in 1980, the building was again vacant.

Almost immediately, Steven Oliver, President of Oliver & Company, became interested in the property as a potential grouping of shops *a la* Walnut Square. The architectural firm, The Ratcliff Architects, was commissioned, and Peter Gray Scott of the firm was the designer of the project, known as Elmwood Village. The plan was to utilize what was on the site, at least in terms of massing and footprint.

Using the outlines—and perhaps even the framing—of the original buildings, a New England village emerged on College Avenue. It is the only three-story structure in the Elmwood commercial district, as it followed closely what was there before: a two-story house atop a one-story shops building.

In May 1983, when the Village project was on the verge of completion, the Elmwood was in the midst of a trend toward commercial con-

dominiums, with a number of tenants on College Avenue buying their retail spaces from the building owners. The owners of the almost-finished project applied to the Planning Commission and received approval to condominiumize the eleven units of retail and office space.

Since the building opened, a copy shop has been the central anchor tenant, although the ownership has changed. The first was Berkeley's own Copymat, which had started in downtown about 1980. Currently, Elmwood Copy is in the space, overseen by Amir Iqbal.

Developer Steven Oliver was pursuing other abiding interests during the turmoil of creating Elmwood Village. Having previously little interest in art, Oliver found, on a visit to an art museum, that Modern art suddenly resonated with him. In the mid-1980s, in a bold move to counteract the commercialism of the art world, he and his wife opened their Sonoma county ranch to site-specific art that they commissioned: art that could not be bought or sold. Steven Oliver is considered an arts philanthropist and has served as chair of the board of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and the California College of the Arts.

16. Significance.

The Elmwood Village has architectural significance. It is the most recent building built in the Elmwood commercial district. Built during the emergence of the Post-Modern style, the Village is the most literal manifestation in Berkeley. The complex is also the only one of its kind in the Elmwood: a meandering path leading to shops and offices in what had been an older building, reworked for its new use. The idea can be traced back to San Francisco's ground-breaking Ghirardelli Square of 1964.

Features to Preserve.

- the complex is pretty much intact after forty years existence. Therefore, all features should be called out: siding, shopfronts, vestibule,

The Elmwood Village is also significant as a tangible manifestation of developer Steven Oliver's interest in art and architecture. Perhaps more mundane than the work at his outdoor art gallery at his Sonoma ranch, the Village exhibits his creativity in commissioning the right architect who could design a building that would be a good fit in its location in the traditional-looking Elmwood commercial district.

arched entrance, paving, pathway, name over the arched entrance, windows, and dormers.

17. Historic Value— Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes
Architectural Value— Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

18. Is the property endangered? No

19. Bibliography.

Contract notice for the Nevin House, *Daily Pacific Builder*, 29 September 1908.

Block books and Sanborn maps

Directories.

Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.

Ormsby Donogh Real Estate File (1939–1977), BAHA.

Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.

Berkeley Tourist and Business Survey, 1924.

“A Profile of the Elmwood: Trends and Counter-Trends in a Berkeley Neighborhood Commercial District” Joanna Callenbach, Geography 181 class paper, Spring 1978.

ancestry.com

Correspondence with Carrol T. Nevin, 1981 and 1982.

“Main Street, Continued” by Betty Marvin, *Berkeley Gazette*, 17 September 1981.

“Moratorium Stalls College Ave. Project” by Liz Everette, *The Press*, 30 September 1981.

“Dismantling of Old Rep Building Draws Protest” by Frances Starn, *Berkeley Gazette*, 5 March 1982.

“Encore, Encore!” by Heidi Seney, *The Press*, 28 July 1982.

“Elmwood is Going Commercial Condo” by Miranda Ewell, *Montclarion*, 25 May 1983.

20. Recorder

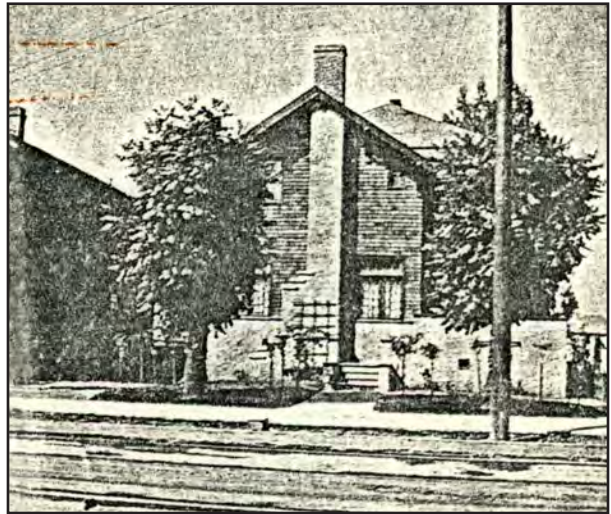
Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird,
2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

27 October 2025

Additional Photographs.



Elmwood Village. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



The Thomas Nevin House (Clarence Casebolt Dakin, 1908). The framing of the house may have survived within Elmwood Village. Courtesy of Carroll T. Nevin.



The vacant Nevin House and Nevin shopfronts after the Berkeley Repertory Theater had moved out. Anthony Bruce, 1982.



The Nevin House and Nevin shopfronts in 1949. Donogh Real Estate File, BAHA.



The Nevin House and Nevin shopfronts, showing the pergola in the Nevins' front "yard." Ormsby Donogh, 1939, Donogh Real Estate File, BAHA.



Construction, or deconstruction, beginning. Betty Marvin, 1982.

Additional Photographs.



*Elmwood Village, entrance, looking southwest.
Anthony Bruce, 2025.*



*Elmwood Village, entrance, looking northwest.
Anthony Bruce, 2025.*



*Elmwood Village developer Steve Oliver at the
Berkeley Repertory Theatre site in 1981. Bob
Doty photo, The Press, 30 September 1981.*



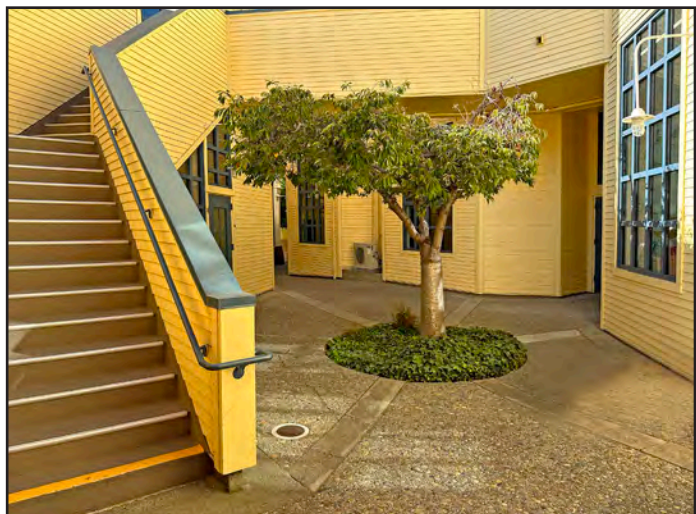
*left: Dick inside the Reliable Fruit Market, 2976
College Avenue. Byron Bolting, 1947, Berkeley His-
torical Society*

*left bottom: Elmwood Village seen from above.
Found online.*

Additional Photographs.



*Interior vistas of Elmwood Village, 2980 College Avenue.
Anthony Bruce, 2025*



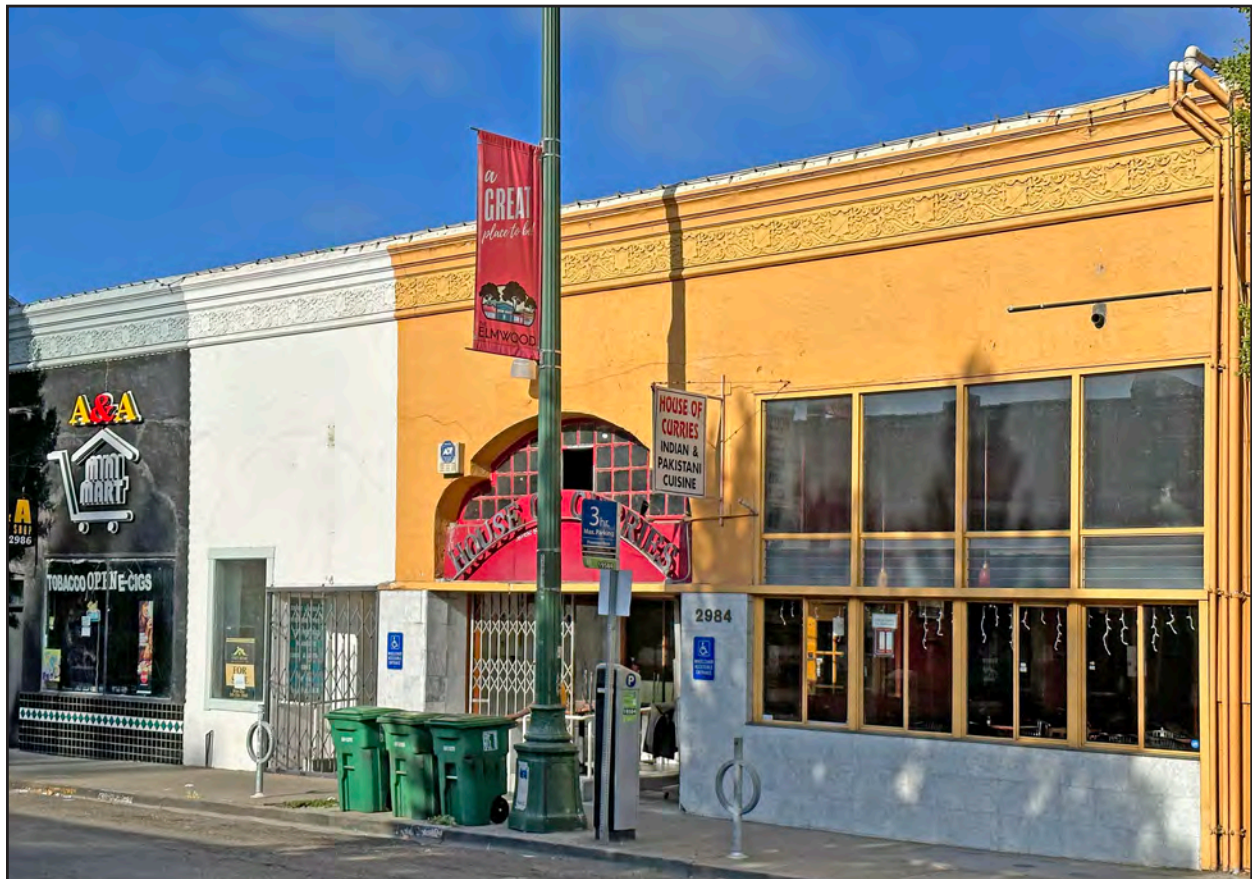


Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 13
Sparhawk Building
2982 College Avenue



The Sparhawk Building, 2982 College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Address:** 2982, 2984, 2986, 2988 College Avenue
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 052-1573-00401
(Dutard Property, Block A, northern portion of Lots 4 and 5)
Dimensions: 70 feet x 100 feet
Cross Streets: Ashby Avenue and Webster Street
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 12053
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
 - a. **Building(s):** Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
 - b. **Landscape or Open Space:** No
 - c. **Historic Site:** No
 - d. **District:** Yes
 - e. **Other:** Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Sparhawk Building
Commonly Known Name: not known
6. **Date of Construction:** 1928 **Factual:** Yes
Source of Information: City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 30981, 8 August 1928
7. **Architect:** A. J. Yerrick, 5255 College Avenue, Oakland
8. **Builder:** A. J. Yerrick
9. **Style:** Storefront
10. **Original Owners:** Dr. Edward Ernest Sparhawk, Lafayette
Original Use: commercial (4 stores)
11. **Present Owner:** Trust Wu Shu Tr Bypass Trust
Present Occupant: House of Curries, 2984 College; vacant, 2986 College; A&A Mini Mart, 2988 College
12. **Present Use:** commercial (3 stores)
Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** C-E-
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Good **Interior:** unknown **Grounds:** Ø
Has the property's exterior been altered? Yes

14. Description.

Two houses dating from 1909 and 1910 were demolished in 1928 to make way for this one-story Class C building of brick construction finished in cement plaster. The façade originally featured four large Moorish arches, each defining a storefront. They contained traditional entrances, display windows, and curved transoms. All the arches were either removed, covered, or filled in during various remodelings. In recent years, the second-from-the-right arch—complete with transom—has been uncovered.

An architecturally significant remodeling of the lower two thirds of the building took place in stages between 1950 and 1957, first for Thos Tenney: Music on Records. The architect was Roger Lee. Ribbed aluminum decking was applied vertically to the shopfronts. The interior

of the Thos Tenney record store was as beautifully designed as a Mid-Century Modern residence. Not much remains of Lee's exceptional commercial design. The southernmost shopfront (which was the sophisticated Roger Lee entrance to the Inside Inn) was redone tepidly with traditional tiles. The center storefront—now vacant—retains some of the minimalist 1950s styling, as does the restaurant façade next to it.

The elaborate original 1928 frieze beneath the cornice remains intact with all its bas-relief vines and shields. Today, the Sparhawk Building is a mixture of different styles and alterations.

15. History.

In 1909, the second house facing College Avenue was built in the Dutard Property, next to the Nevin House. The owners were Anna Nivison Force, widow of Dr. Levi P. Force and herself a Berkeley clubwoman, and her son Dr. John N. Force, who joined the University staff in 1910 and became Chair of the Department of Hygiene. Anna Force died on her birthday in 1917 and the house was sold to Dr. Edward Ernest Sparhawk.

Dr. Sparhawk graduated in dentistry from Stanford in 1899. Prior to the move to Berkeley, he practiced in Mexico and Ketchikan, Alaska. He married Martha Ann Brockhurst, and their son Alvin was born in 1904. The family moved into the roomy brown-shingle house, where Dr. Sparhawk set up his dental practice.

In 1927 the Sparhawks moved to Lafayette and the same year they had their College Avenue home demolished—as well as the 1910 Harding House next door—in preparation for a commercial building to be built on the property. Dr. Sparhawk continued his practice in Oakland,

and returned to Berkeley to live (3030 Benvenue) three years before his death in 1959. Dr. Sparhawk's obituary stated, "During World War II he was affiliated with the top-secret Manhattan Project and received a certificate of merit from the Secretary of War for his contributions to atomic bomb research."

The Sparhawk Building was begun in August of 1928. Its lively Mediterranean-inspired design was the work of Oakland architect Allen James Yerrick. The longest lasting business in the Sparhawk Building was the Inside Inn, which was in business by 1931, and continued to serve lunch and dinner in genteel surroundings until 1968. The next year, the site became the first location on College Avenue of the ever-popular King Yen restaurant. Two years later King Yen moved to 2984 College in the same building, and in 1990, across the street to 2995 College into a building the restaurant owners had meticulously restored.

During World War II, besides his work on the Manhattan Project, Dr. Sparhawk aided the war

effort by converting the two northernmost shop spaces into living quarters. At least three other building owners in the Elmwood did the same thing with their buildings.

Probably the most well-known business in the Sparhawk Building was Thos Tenney: Music on Records. Thomas W. Tenney and his wife Margaret and their two sons tired of the harsh winters in New England and came to California to open a phonograph record store in a college town. Berkeley was their first stop. Richard M. Hunter's record shop at 2984 College was for sale and they bought it in August 1950. Beginning with a \$4,800 remodel that October, and several more alterations and expansions over the years, Tenney created a state-of-the-art record shop that exuded the good taste of its Mid-Century Modern design. The Tenneys' designer, "the brilliant young architect Roger Lee," as described by the *Berkeley Gazette* in relation to the new record store, is better known as the architect of countless livable Modern houses, but proved with the record store that he could design a commercial business with the same skill and creativity. Not only did he design the warm, wood paneled interior, but the eye-catching exterior as well. Eventually Lee redesigned all the storefronts in the building. The 1952 article in the *Gazette* went on to say that the store "has drawn comment from many parts of the nation." The Thos Tenney store remained in business until 1963 when the Ten-

neys left to pursue their other mutual interest: photography. Thos Tenney shared his architectural photos with the fledgling Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association, which were published in the organization's first calendar, *Heritage Houses*, in 1971.

One of the first businesses in the Sparhawk Building—in the southernmost shop which seemed to have been designed for restaurant use—was the Augusta Inn. It opened in 1929 and the proprietor was Robert A. Hawkins. At the time, the Dixie Inn in Richmond, Virginia, was owned by the fourth generation of the Hawkins family. The Augusta Inn was advertised as serving "Genuine Southern cooking prepared by experienced negro chefs who learned the art of cooking in the South. Our customers come back—that is our recommendation." Unfortunately, the Augusta Inn did not last long; it was replaced by the Inside Inn after less than two years.

The Sparhawk Building stayed in the Sparhawk family until early 1970. Over the years since the superb Modern remodeling of the shopfronts by Roger Lee, the building has suffered from lack of coordination in subsequent piecemeal alterations. At this point a restoration is due, but to which period? The original frieze remains and the Moorish arches seem to remain under the stucco. But a few pieces of the Roger Lee design remain as well.

14. Significance.

The Sparhawk Building is significant as the last original building built in the Elmwood commercial district. With its completion in early 1929, the commercialization of the two blocks was complete.

The building is significant for its original romantic design, combining historical elements from different parts of Europe. The Sparhawk Building and the Wilson Building next door

come closest—of all the Elmwood buildings—to evoking illustrations from storybooks, the goal of many architects of the time.

The Sparhawk Building is significant as the site of an early commercial design of renowned Mid-Century Modern architect Roger Lee.

The Sparhawk Building relates well to the other Elmwood commercial buildings in its scale.

Features to Preserve.

- the elaborate frieze and cornice
- the Moorish arches, both hidden and uncovered
- all remnants of the Roger Lee alterations from the 1950s

17. Historic Value— Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

Architectural Value— Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

18. Is the property endangered? No

19. Bibliography.

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 30981, 8 August 1928; as well as several other applications for alterations.

Block books and Sanborn maps

Directories.

Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.

Ormsby Donogh Real Estate File (1939–1977), BAHA.

Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.

“A Profile of the Elmwood: Trends and Counter-Trends in a Berkeley Neighborhood Commercial District” Joanna Callenbach, Geography 181 class paper, Spring 1978.

ancestry.com

“Try Berkeley First—It’s Home!: The Augusta Inn,” *The Courier*, 1 February 1930.

Obituary for Anna Nivison Force, *San Francisco Examiner*, 31 July 1917.

“Dr. Force, U. C. Expert, Dies After Illness,” *Berkeley Gazette*, 23 June 1938.

Obituary for Dr. Edward Ernest Sparhawk, *Berkeley Gazette*, 10 November 1959.

“Elmwood District Concentrates Varied Service in Small Area,” *Berkeley Gazette*, 21 May 1952.

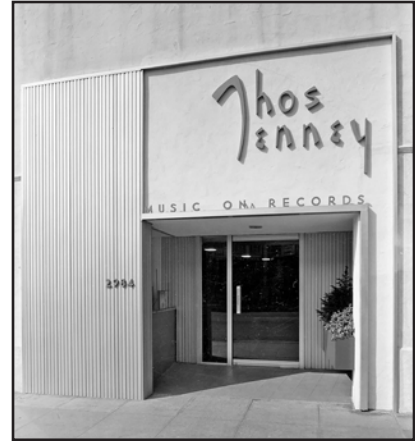
In Memoriam: Thomas Walker Tenney (1920–2012) and Margaret Whitney Klaw Tenney (1922–2011) by Will Tenney.

20. Recorder

Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird, 2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

29 October 2025

Additional Photographs.



above left: Sparhawk Building.
Anthony Bruce, 2025

above: entrance to Thos Tenney Music on Records (Roger Lee, 1950).
from the Internet.



left: Sparhawk Building, showing the Roger Lee entryways still intact.
Anthony Bruce, 1982



The Sparhawk Building showing intact 1928 design. Ormsby Donogh, 1939, Donogh Real Estate File, BAHA.

Additional Photographs.



The interior of Richard M. Hunter's record shop that existed in the same space that Thos Tenney Music on Records moved into in 1950. Byron Bolting, 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.



Partial interior view of Thos Tenney Music on Records, most likely showing the northernmost shop. Found on-line.



Thomas W. Tenney on the right, with John T. Moon, service manager. Berkeley Gazette, 18 November 1954.

Robert A. Hawkins, owner of the Augusta Inn, 2988 College Avenue. The Courier, 1 February 1930.



WRITE IN INK

Application for Building Permit.

CLASS A-B AND C BUILDING

Application is hereby made to the Department of Buildings and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for permission to Build a 1 story 4 STORES room class C building.

on the W Side of COLLEGE AVE 55 feet N. of WEBSTER street.

Being Lot No. PORTION 485 Block A/1573A DUTARD PROPERTY Tract.

According to plans and Specifications herewith submitted. All provisions of the Building Law will be complied with in the erection, of said building whether specified herein or not.

Estimated entire cost of building \$ 11,000.00 Extreme height of building 21 ft.

Size of Lot 70 by 100 feet. Size of proposed building 70 ft. by 70 ft.

Building to be occupied as 4 STORES by (No.) families.

	WALLS			PIERS OR COLUMNS		JOISTS		GIRDERS			
	HEIGHT	MATERIAL	THICKNESS SIDE FRONT	MATERIAL	SIZE	MATERIAL	SIZE	LONGEST SPAN	MATERIAL	SIZE	LONGEST SPAN
Footings	<u>2 ft.</u>	<u>CONCRETE</u>	<u>24"</u>	<u>CONCRETE</u>	<u>3-4</u>						
Foundations	<u>2 ft.</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>17" 17"</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>3-4</u>						
Basement											
1st story	<u>14 ft.</u>	<u>BRICK</u>	<u>17" 17"</u>			<u>O.P.</u>	<u>2x14</u>	<u>18 ft.</u>			
2nd story											
3rd story											
4th story											
5th story											
6th story											
7th story											
8th story											

Light shaft wall covering to be of

Roof covered with Tar and gravel Pitch 1/4 in 12 ft.

Chimneys of Brick lined with 3x8 T.C. flues any patent flues? no

Gas grate flues to be patent chimney or brick?

Any dumb waiters or chutes? Any elevator (freight or passenger)

Cove brackets will be solid.

Name of Owner of Ground Mr. E. E. Spunk Res. Address Lafayette, Cal.

Name of Owner of Building " Res. Address "

Name of Lessee of Building None Res. Address "

Name of Architect or Designer A. J. Merrick Bus. Address 5255 College Ave., Oak.

Name of Builder " Bus. Address "

I hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

A. J. Merrick
Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder.

5255 College Ave. Oak.
Address

This Permit expires one year from date unless sooner revoked by the City Council.

Date AUG - 2 1928 Permit No. 30981

Berkheim Print West Berkeley

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 30981, 8 August 1928



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 14
Wilson-Tulanian Building
2992 College Avenue



The Wilson-Tulanian Building, 2992 College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Address:** 2992, 2996, 2998 College Avenue
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 052-1573-00600
(Dutard Property, Block A, southern portion of Lot 5)
Dimensions: 53 feet x 55 feet
Cross Streets: Ashby Avenue and Webster Street
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 12054
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
 - a. **Building(s):** Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
 - b. **Landscape or Open Space:** No
 - c. **Historic Site:** No
 - d. **District:** Yes
 - e. **Other:** Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Wilson-Tulanian Building
Commonly Known Name: not known
6. **Date of Construction:** 1923 **Factual:** Yes

Source of Information: City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 13745, 27 March 1923
7. **Architect:** Hutchison & Mills, Oakland
8. **Builder:** Leslie R. Wilson
9. **Style:** Shopfront
10. **Original Owners:** Leslie R. Wilson, 2216 Blake Street
Original Use: commercial (3 stores)
11. **Present Owner:** Rose Oriental Rugs Inc.
Present Occupant: vacant, 2992 College; Rose Oriental Rugs, 2998 College,
12. **Present Use:** commercial (2 stores)
Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** C-E, R-1
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Excellent **Interior:** unknown **Grounds:** Ø
Has the property's exterior been altered? No

14. Description.

Built in 1923, this is a one-story reinforced concrete Class “C” building, constructed to contain three stores. Currently, the building is divided into two stores, but all three traditional storefronts remain. The storefronts are contained within three large, round arches facing College Avenue. There is an additional arch on the south side of the building facing Webster Street and serving as a window. Below the parapet is a running frieze in a circle motif. This is repeated at the tops of the piers between the arches, and at the same height as the base of the transoms. There are spiral columns embedded in the corners of each pier, and medallions set in the wall above and between each arch.

The building is basically unaltered, including the arched transoms divided into tall, narrow panes, and the polychrome tiles at the base of the display windows. About forty-five years ago, the building was painted in brilliant, jewel-like colors in keeping with the exotic appearance of the building and the nature of the business within. The northernmost shop features an elaborately designed back wall with a fireplace, paneling, and mezzanine above with railings, dating from 1924. Tulanian Rug Company added a similar back wall to the southernmost store in 1928, designed by A. J. Yerrick.

A billboard is attached to the Webster Street side of the building.

15. History.

The Oakland architectural firm of Hutchison & Mills (Robert A. Hutchison and Reginald L. Mills) specialized in quality store designs. An article of theirs about “the ideal shop building” appeared in the March 1924 issue of *Architect and Engineer*, illustrated with photos of their latest buildings. Berkeley is fortunate to have several of their one-story shop buildings; their Wilson-Tulanian Building has long been a popular favorite. The outer walls of a slightly smaller version of this building stand at Bancroft and Ellsworth where they will become the ground floor exterior of a new large housing building. Leslie R. Wilson and Frederick E. Romie, both builders, were the usual investors for the Hutchison & Mills buildings in both Berkeley and Oakland. Two were built in the Elmwood commercial district.

The first tenants in the building were The Old World Shop (2998) and Downings Grocery (2996). A latecomer, in 1924, was Mrs. Doris Conner of North Berkeley who opened an interior decorating business at 2992 College. She added an attractively designed open mezzanine at the rear of her shop with a fireplace as its

central feature. Soon after Hachadoor Tulanian purchased the building in 1927 and moved his Oriental rug business into 2998 College, he may have been inspired by Mrs. Conner’s treatment of her space and commissioned architect A. J. Yerrick to design a similar mezzanine-fireplace combination for his store.

The following history is taken from the Berkeley History Plaque affixed to the side of the building for its centennial by the Berkeley Historical Society in 2024:

“In 1922, Armenian genocide survivor Hachadoor Tulanian (1894–1965) arrived in Berkeley and opened an Oriental rug shop at 2938 College Avenue [in Bischoff Building No. 2]. In 1927 he bought the Wilson Building, which contained three small shops, and moved the rug business to the corner location, where he added a concrete floor and drain for rug washing and wooden pallets on the roof for drying. Living nearby at 6536 Benvenue Avenue, he would leave a ‘back after lunch’ sign on an unlocked shop door. He could regularly be seen transporting rugs tied to the running boards of his car. In 1950 Hachadoor’s two sons joined the

business and it expanded into the entire building. His two grandchildren and great-granddaughter took over ownership in 1997, proudly continuing one of the Elmwood district's longest family-owned businesses.

"The building's distinctive design features oversized arched clerestory windows. It was one of the locations used in the 1993 Whoopi Goldberg film *Made in America*."

In 1943, as did other Elmwood building owners, Mr. Tulanian turned the center store into wartime housing. After his death on New Year's Eve in 1965, his wife Zabel continued coming to the shop each morning to mend rugs.

Many Berkeleyans remember that the building had been painted a shade of hospital green. That all changed in 1973, according to Heidi Seney in an article written for the *Berkeley Gazette*, when "an imaginative young painter was

given free rein and the result was a carefully rendered combination of colors: yellow-ochre complemented by a bright blue for the arches over each of the entryways, and an outline of the arches in orchid.

"The colors are repeated in the running frieze with a circle motif, below the parapet, in the spiral columns between the arches, and in the tiles that form the base of the building. The building stands out in a graceful manner."

At the ceremony where the plaque was placed on the building in March 2024, the entire Tulanian family gathered for the ceremony celebrating both the building and the 100-year-old family-run business. Sadly, the third and fourth generation family members announced their retirement. The building has since been sold, and a new chapter has begun with another Oriental rug business replacing the old.

16. Significance.

The Wilson-Tulanian Building is architectural-ly significant for its eclectic and elaborate design and ornamentation. It is the most romantic and intriguing of all Hutchison and Mills' one-story shop building designs. It is one of the most memorable buildings in the Elmwood commercial district.

The building is significant for its commercial history. Tulanian Bros. Oriental Rugs opened in

1922 at 2938 College Avenue, owned by brothers Avedez and Hachadoor Tulanian. In 1927 Hachadoor purchased the Wilson Building and moved the business to that location, honoring the building with more than 95 years of a single family-owned business.

Features to Preserve.

- the elaborate frieze and other ornamentation
- the Moorish arches
- the tile bulkheads
- the traditional shopfronts
- the arched transoms

17. Historic Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

Architectural Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

18. Is the property endangered? No

19. Bibliography.

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 13745, 27 March 1923; as well as several other applications for alterations.

Block books and Sanborn maps

Directories.

Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.

Ormsby Donogh Real Estate File (1939–1977), BAHA.

Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.

Berkeley Tourist and Business Survey, 1924.

“A Profile of the Elmwood: Trends and Counter-Trends in a Berkeley Neighborhood Commercial District” Joanna Callenbach, Geography 181 class paper, Spring 1978.

ancestry.com

“Improved Store Building Design” by R. L. Mills, *Architect and Engineer*, March 1924.

“A 60-Year Enterprise in Elmwood” by Heidi Seney for Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association, *Berkeley Gazette*, 18 April 1982.

Berkeley History Plaque, Berkeley Historical Society Plaque Committee, 2024.

“Historical Society Honors Tulanian Building & Family” by Burl Willes, *Berkeley Times*, 2024.

20. Recorder

Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird, 2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

30 October 2025

Additional Photographs.



The Wilson-Tulanian Building, 2992 College Avenue, when almost new. Architect & Engineer. March 1924.



The Wilson-Tulanian Building. Anthony Bruce, 1982.

The Wilson-Tulanian Building. Ormsby Donogh, 1939, Donogh Real Estate File, BAH.



Additional Photographs.



left and below: Wilson-Tulanian Building and detail of tiled bulkhead. Anthony Bruce, 2025



Fred Jacobs in his appliance store at 2992 College Avenue, showing the fireplace and paneled over-mantel from 1924. Byron Bolfig, 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.



At the plaque unveiling, the extended Tulanian family poses with Berkeley Historical Society leaders and local officials.

Robert Kehlmann, 2024.



Additional Photographs.



Wilson-Tulanian Building in 1969, showing the light green paint job that it sported for many years. BAHA Archives.



Wilson-Tulanian Building in 2020, showing the polychrome paint job that it has sported since 1973. Anthony Bruce, 2020.

WRITE IN INK

Application for Building Permit.

CLASS A-B AND C BUILDING

Application is hereby made to the Department of Buildings and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for permission to

Build a 1 story 3 room class C building.

on the N.W. corner of College Ave street feet of Webster street.

Being Lot No. 5 Block 2 Tract.

According to plans and Specifications herewith submitted. All provisions of the Building Law will be complied with in the erection, of said building whether specified herein or not. undetermined

Estimated entire cost of building \$ 70,000.00 Extreme height of building 24 ft. 2000

Size of Lot 55 by 83.4 feet. Size of proposed building 57 ft. by 53.7 ft.

Building to be occupied as Stores by (No.) 2 families.

	WALLS			PIERS OR COLUMNS		JOISTS			GIRDERS		
	HEIGHT	MATERIAL	THICKNESS SIDE FRONT	MATERIAL	SIZE	MATERIAL	SIZE	LONGEST SPAN	MATERIAL	SIZE	LONGEST SPAN
Footings	<u>12"</u>	<u>Concrete</u>	<u>15" x 30"</u>	<u>Concrete</u>	<u>24" x 24"</u>						
Foundations											
Basement											
1st story	<u>16"</u>	<u>Concrete</u>	<u>6" x 6"</u>	<u>Concrete</u>	<u>10" x 8"</u>	<u>Wood</u>	<u>2 x 4</u>	<u>slaps</u>			
2nd story						<u>Wood</u>	<u>2 x 6</u>	<u>18'</u>	<u>4 x 2</u>	<u>Wood</u>	<u>11'</u>
3rd story											
4th story											
5th story											
6th story											
7th story											
8th story											

Light shaft wall covering to be of.....

Roof covered with 7" and Gravel Pitch Pitch

Chimneys of lined with any patent flues?

Gas grate flues to be patent chimney or brick?

Any dumb waiters or chutes? Any elevator (freight or passenger).....

Cave brackets will be sold.

Name of Owner of Ground Leslie P. Wilson Res. Address 2216 Blakely St

Name of Owner of Building 1 Res. Address.....

Name of Lessee of Building..... Res. Address.....

Name of Architect or Designer Hutchinson Res. Address Cabaret

Name of Builder Leslie P. Wilson Res. Address.....

I hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

2998-96-92 College Leslie P. Wilson
Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder.
Address 2216 Blakely St.

NOTE: This Permit expires one year from date unless sooner revoked by the City Council.

Date MAR 27 1923 Permit No. 13745

Berkheim Print  West Berkeley

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 13745, 27 March 1923

WRITE IN INK

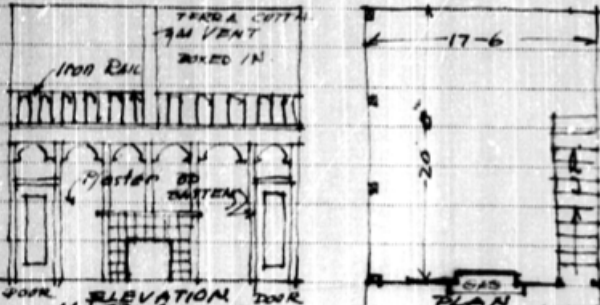
APPLICATION FOR BUILDING PERMIT

Alterations and Repairs

Application is hereby made to the Department of Buildings and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for permission to build
 alter or add to a 1 story 1 room consult store building
 Located 2998 College Ave
 All provisions of the Building Law will be complied with in the erection, alteration or repairing of said building whether specified herein or not.
 Value \$500.00
 Building to be occupied as store by (No.) 1 families.

WRITE PLAINLY FULL DESCRIPTION OF WORK TO BE DONE

To build a balcony or mezzanine floor
17'-6" x 20'-0"
posts - 4x4.
girders 4x6.
joists - 2x12
Plank - 1x4 T&G.
Rail. - wrought iron



Sketches: ELEVATION and PLAN. Dimensions: 17'-6" x 20'-0".

Name of Owner H. J. Sullivan Residence Address 6455 Durant Ave
 Name of Builder A. J. Yerrick Residence Address 5255 College Ave

We hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

In Zone No. 1 Ordinance No. 646

A. J. Yerrick
 Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder.
 Address 5255 College Ave

FOR DEPARTMENT USE ONLY

Number 31809 Street College Ave Page 1
 Filed 11-1-28 Ready 11-1-28 Checked by 11-1-28
 Permit No. 31809
 Date Issued 11-1-28

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 31809, 1 November 1928, showing a sketch for the gas fireplace and mezzanine.



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 15

United States Post Office, Elmwood Station
2705 Webster Street



United States Post Office, Elmwood Station, 2705 Webster Street. Anthony Bruce, 2023.

1. **Street Address:** 2705 Webster Street
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 052-1567-00400
(Elmwood Park Tract, Block C, Lot 23)
Dimensions: about 55 feet x 120 feet
Cross Streets: College Avenue and Piedmont Avenue
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 11912
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
 - a. **Building(s):** Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
 - b. **Landscape or Open Space:** Yes
 - c. **Historic Site:** No
 - d. **District:** Yes
 - e. **Other:** Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** United States Post Office, Elmwood Station
Commonly Known Name: Elmwood Post Office
6. **Date of Construction:** 1948; 1977 **Factual:** yes
Source of Information: City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 62610, 21 January 1948; City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. B-011977291, 8 December 1976.
7. **Architect:** James W. Plachek, 2131 University Avenue; Bart Jones, 264 Arlington Avenue, Kensington
8. **Builder:** W. H. Livingston, 1152 Euclid Avenue; R. W. Poole, 240 Hegenberger Road, Oakland
9. **Style:** Moderne; Brutalist/Sea Ranch Rustic
10. **Original Owners:** Bernard W. White; W. R. White
Original Use: institutional (post office)
11. **Present Owner:** White, Catherine Y Trust et al
Present Occupant: United States Post Office
12. **Present Use:** institutional (post office)
Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** C-E, R-2
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Excellent **Interior:** fine **Grounds:** fine
Has the property's exterior been altered? yes and no

14. Description.

The present appearance of the Elmwood Post Office dates from 1976–77. In 1974, the service station on the corner was demolished and a major addition was built onto the existing 1948 post office building, behind to the east, that faced Webster Street. The older post office is now a rectangular two-story box of a building. Existing windows have been filled in, but an entrance remains where the original public entrance was located. The locked plain, metal door is recessed a few feet from the outer wall. The surface of the walls on either side are covered with diagonal pieces of redwood; the wall above the door slopes up and outward to meet the outer wall and is also covered with lengths of redwood.

Facing College Avenue behind a parking lot entered from Webster Street and containing eight spaces, is the 1977 addition, designed to appear as a new post office building. The older building was opened up on the west side and the interiors of the two structures are now combined. The 1977 structure is cream-painted rough cement plaster. It consists of two blocky wings that are bridged by an expanse of glass topped with a wide section of diagonally placed pieces of redwood. At the left, a few feet away from the northern blocky wing, a stucco “fin” pierces both the diagonal redwood strips as well as the glass wall below. The redwood pieces beyond

the fin are angled in the opposite direction from the rest. There are ten areas of glass, eleven counting the one beyond the fin.

There is a tall, narrow window in the west wall of the north wing. The south wing juts out at an angle similar to a ship’s prow. There is no window. Instead a small plaque featuring the Post Office’s logo of that era (which also appeared on a postage stamp) is attached high on the wall. Around the corner, a narrow window has been placed in a recessed slit in the wing’s Webster Street façade.

There is a combination ramp and stairway leading to the raised entrance in the glass section facing the parking lot. The ramp begins at the Webster Street sidewalk and the stairway is reached from the parking lot.

The sign for the building is made from bronzed letters that are affixed to the long redwood-slat panel. Beginning in the center and leading off to the right, it reads, in three lines, “United States Post Office, Elmwood Station, Berkeley, California 94705.” The lettering is difficult to see, as it is camouflaged against the weathered redwood.

The interior is exceedingly plain for a post office. The off-white walls and unfinished redwood trim are reminiscent of the interiors at Sea Ranch.

15. History.

This southeast corner of the Elmwood commercial district has seen major changes over the years. In 1909, architect Walter Ratcliff and his business partner Charles L. MacFarland built two speculative houses on the deep lot, fronting both houses on Webster Street with the addresses of 2701 and 2703 Webster. The two blocks of the district were almost completely built up with commercial buildings when the Standard Oil Company built a service station

on the site of 2701 Webster in 1926. Two years later a service garage was added at the north edge of the property. The Ratcliff house survived all of this by having been moved out of the way in June, 1925. It landed on the south side of Ashby near Regent. Threatened again in 1971, the house and two others were moved, this time to an empty lot at 2929 Benvenue Avenue.

The station became an Elmwood institution.

As Joe Moore's Chevron Station in the 1950s and 1960s, a number of neighborhood kids had their first job there.

The Elmwood Station of the United States Post Office was established in 1909 as Station 8 in Rolla D. Fuller's drugstore on Ashby at College. When the post office moved into its own space on the Russell Street side of the Dondero Building in 1927, it became Elmwood Station. After twenty years it was time for a dedicated stand-alone post office building. The lot at 2703 Webster Street was leased from Bernard W. White (owner of the Topside Market who also owned several properties in the Elmwood). James W. Plachek was selected as the architect for the new building. Plachek was known for his many civic buildings, including the nearby Claremont Branch Library at Benvenue and Ashby and John Muir School at Claremont and Ashby. This post office was one of Plachek's last designs, as he died in December 1948. A building permit was taken out in January 1948 and the completed \$50,000 building was dedicated on September 30, 1948. On hand were Mayor Laurence L. Cross and Postmaster Frank M. Whiting, who remarked that the Elmwood building was "the perfect station." The dedication was Whiting's last official act as he was to retire the next day.

Once again, a Ratcliff house was moved out of harm's way. To make way for the new post office, the house at 2703 Webster was moved next door to the back yard of the house at 2713 Webster. However, at a later date, *both* houses at 2713 Webster were demolished for more employee parking.

Sometime in the early 1970s the post office moved to the corner shop space in the Dondero

Building, which had been vacated by Curtis & Gray men's clothing. The golden oak cabinetry and counters were set up in the shop space and a new, albeit temporary, post office was created. In July 1974 the Chevron station was demolished. The Post Office was planning a major expansion of Elmwood Station. A building permit was applied for in December 1976 and construction was begun in January 1977.

The Kensington firm Bart Jones Architects, which was established in 1973, designed the addition, which, when finished, appeared to be a completely new building. In fact, the 1948 post office is still standing. However, it was gutted, windows were closed off, what little ornament it had was removed, and the west wall was demolished to connect it with the planned addition. Customer services were moved to the addition upon completion.

The new wing looks very much of its era. It is an intriguing combination of Sea Ranch-inspired natural, weathered redwood, and blocky Brutalist forms done in stucco rather than concrete. At the same time a parking lot was constructed fronting on College Avenue, with its entrance on Webster. Short, stocky bollards of rough stucco (matching the finish on the building) along the College Avenue side of the lot were connected by wooden fence rails. Pedestrians, looking for a short-cut, continually walked over the low fence, damaging it. Finally, a high, black wrought iron fence was installed in its place.

The customer parking lot was designed for nine parking spaces, but that number was reduced to eight when a handicapped ramp entrance was introduced in 1995. The new entrance combines a ramp and steps in an eye-catching com-

16. Significance.

The Elmwood Post Office building is significant as the best example of the architectural aesthetics of the 1970s to be found in the Elmwood commercial district. It is intriguing to

find the influence of the rustic Sea Ranch style used on an institutional building. The faux Brutalist style of the building proper gives it a substantial quality, complementing the lightness of

the weathered wood and the bank of windows in the center.

The Elmwood Post Office is significant in the way it helps to impart the quality of a small town “Main Street” to these two blocks of Col-

lege Avenue. It serves as a place for neighbors to gather—on business—and meet for a visit: an important way to maintain a sense of community.

Features to Preserve.

- the weathered, unpainted redwood strips
- the stucco form of the 1977 addition
- the bank of windows across the front
- the metal lettering forming the name
- the design of the steps/ramp entrance
- the emblem with the Post Office logo

17. Historic Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes
Architectural Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: No

18. Is the property endangered? No

19. Bibliography.

City of Berkeley Applications for Building Permits.

Block books and Sanborn maps

City directories.

Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.

Ormsby Donogh Real Estate File (1939–1977), BAHA.

Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.

Berkeley Tourist and Business Survey, 1924.

“A Profile of the Elmwood: Trends and Counter-Trends in a Berkeley Neighborhood Commercial District” Joanna Callenbach, Geography 181 class paper, Spring 1978.

ancestry.com

“Berkeley Mail Receipts Grow,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 10 July 1927.

“Elmwood PO to be Dedicated,” *Berkeley Gazette*, 28 September 1948.

20. Recorder

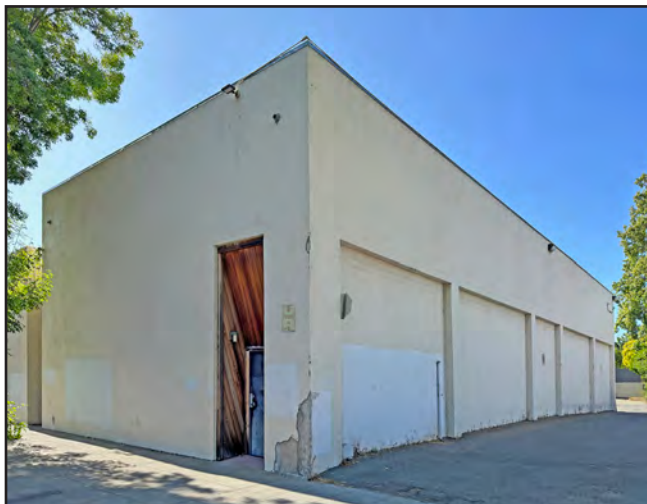
Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird, 2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

31 October 2025

Additional Photographs.



A view of main façade of the Elmwood Station, showing the expanses of glass and angled redwood strips. Viewed across the parking lot. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



The earlier post office building on the site, now stripped, and subordinated to the 1977 addition. A photo of the building before the alterations has not been found. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



The service station that was on the corner site. The Walter Ratcliff-designed house behind was moved to build the 1940s post office and later demolished. Ormsby Donogh, 1939, Donogh Real Estate File, BAH.

Additional Photographs.



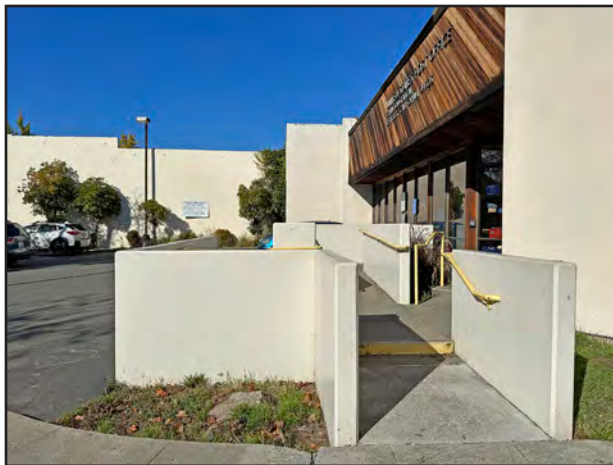
*Views of the Elmwood Station Post Office.
left: customer service area.*

below: signage over the entrance.

below left: the entrance ramp and steps.

bottom: general view from Webster Street.

Anthony Bruce, 2025.



BUILDING PERMIT APPLICATION										B	
HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT CODES AND INSPECTION DIVISION 2134 GROVE STREET BERKELEY, CA. 94704 PH: (415) 644-6550										PERMIT NUMBER B-011977291 Application Rec'd. DATE: 12-8-76 BY: CS	
City of Berkeley											
OCCUPANCY A B C D E <u>F</u> G H I J DIV. <u>2</u> ☐ SIGN PERMIT ☐ ROOFING PERMIT ☐ WATER WELL PERMIT ☐ EXCAVATION and GRADING PERMIT ☐ MOVING PERMIT TYPE OF CONSTRUCTION I II III IV <u>V</u> I-HR. FIRE ZONE 1 2 3 ES. USE ZONE: _____ NUMBER OF STORIES: <u>1</u> HEIGHT: <u>16'</u> AREA OF LOT: _____ FLOOR AREA MAIN BUILDING: (1st. FLOOR) <u>4580</u> 2nd. FLOOR _____ CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL: _____ SIGN PERMIT INFORMATION: TYPE OF SIGN(S) _____ LENGTH _____ WIDTH _____ AREA _____ BUILDING FRONTAGE: _____ SIGN AREA PERMITTED: _____ ROOFING PERMIT INFORMATION: ☐ COMMERCIAL ☐ RESIDENTIAL ☐ FIRE RETARDANT ☐ ORDINARY I hereby certify and agree, if a permit is issued, that all the provisions of the Building Code, the Zoning Ordinance and the Fire Ordinance of the City of Berkeley will be complied with whether herein specified or not, and I hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City, in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub sidewalk placed by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit. I hereby acknowledge that I have read this application, that the information given is correct, and that I am the owner, or the duly authorized agent of the owner. I agree to comply with City and State laws regulating construction, and in doing the work authorized thereby, no person will be employed in violation of the Labor Code of the State of California relating to Workmen's Compensation Insurance. X <u>Burt Jones Architect</u> Signature of Owner, Contractor or Agent AGENT FOR: _____ ADDRESS OF AGENT: _____ CITY: _____ ZIP: _____ TELEPHONE NO.: _____ APPLICATION APPROVAL: THIS PERMIT DOES NOT BECOME VALID UNTIL SIGNED BY THE BUILDING OFFICIAL OR HIS DEPUTY; AND FEES ARE PAID AND RECEIPT IS ACKNOWLEDGED IN SPACE PROVIDED. <u>McA</u> 1-19-77 Signature of Deputy Date										JOB ADDRESS <u>2705 WEBSTER</u> CONDITION OF SOIL AT JOB SITE: ☐ ORIGINAL ☐ ENGINEERED FILL ☐ FILL ☐ HILLSIDE AREA ☐ SEISMIC ZONE AREA NO. OF & EXISTING USE OF BUILDINGS ON LOT: NO. <u>1</u> USE: <u>POST OFFICE</u> CONTRACTOR NAME <u>R.W. POOL</u> ADDRESS <u>240 HEGARBERGER RD.</u> CITY <u>OAK</u> ZIP <u>94621</u> TELEPHONE _____ STATE LICENSE NO. <u>30477</u> CLASS NO. <u>B-1</u> CITY LICENSE NO. _____ OWNER NAME <u>W.B. WHITE</u> MAILING ADDRESS <u>2705 WEBSTER</u> CITY <u>BER.</u> ZIP _____ TELEPHONE _____ DESIGNER NAME <u>BURT JONES</u> ADDRESS <u>201 ARLINGTON</u> CITY <u>PENNSBURG</u> ZIP <u>95425</u> TELEPHONE _____ LENDING AGENCY _____ BRANCH _____ LENDER ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____ PROPOSED WORK ☐ SIGN STRUCTURE ☐ NEW ☐ ALTER ☐ MOVE ☐ ROOFING ☒ ADD ☐ REPAIR ☐ DEMOLISH DESCRIPTION OF WORK: <u>ADDITION TO EXISTING P.O. PER PLANS</u> ☒ COMMERCIAL ☐ RESIDENTIAL ☐ INDUSTRIAL ☐ ACCESSORY NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS _____ VALUATION [including Costs of all labor and material] = \$ <u>100,000</u> BUILDING PERMIT FEE \$ <u>327</u> <u>50</u> ZONING PERMIT FEE \$ _____ SIGN PERMIT FEE \$ _____ ROOFING PERMIT FEE \$ _____ PLAN CHECKING FEE \$ <u>211</u> <u>58</u> PENALTY FEE \$ _____ TOTAL FEE \$ <u>539</u> <u>08</u> ZONING APPROVAL ☒ USE PERMIT APPROVED # <u>7719</u> ☐ VARIANCE GRANTED ☐ APPROVED OFFSTREET PARKING ☐ LANDMARKS PRESERVATION THIS IS YOUR RECEIPT WHEN MACHINE VALIDATED 1-19-77 291 1-1977 1-19-77 291 X 02119	

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. B-011977291, 8 December 1976.

APPLICATION FOR BUILDING PERMIT

Type I, II, or III Building

WRITE IN INK

Application is hereby made to the Bureau of Building and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for permission to
Build a Group F Type III Cir. Story, 3 Room Building.
on the ^{corner} North of Webster Street 70 feet East of College Avenue.
^{side}
Part of
Being Lot No. 23 & 24 Block C Elmwood Park Tract.
According to plans and Specifications herewith submitted. All provisions of the Building Code will be complied with in
the erection, of said building whether specified herein or not.
Estimated entire cost of building \$ 30,000 Extreme height of building 24'-0" ft.
Size of Lot 50'-0" by 110'-0" feet. Size of proposed building 36'-0" ft. by 85'-0" ft.
Building to be occupied as a Group Bit office Building, by U.S. Government

[illegible]

Light shaft wall covering to be of Plaster on metal lath
Roof covered with Asph. composition roofing Pitch 2'-0" in 8'-0"
Chimneys of _____ lined with _____ Patent Flues 1-6"
Gas flues to be patent chimney or brick = One transverse water house vent
Dumb waiters or chutes _____ Elevator (freight or passenger) _____

Cove brackets will be solid.

Save brackets with us

Name of Owner of Ground	<u>B. W. White</u>	Address	<u>2424 Prince St Berkeley</u>
Name of Owner of Building	<u>" " "</u>	Address	<u>" " " "</u>
Name of Lessee of Building	<u>U. S. Government</u>	Address	
Name of Architect or Designer	<u>A. W. Plachack</u>	Address	<u>2131 University Ave, Berkeley</u>
Name of Engineer	<u>Paul A. Livingston</u>	Address	<u>Mercantile Bldg, Berkeley</u>
Name of Builder	<u>W. A. Livingston</u>	Bus. Address	<u>1152 Euclid Ave., Berkeley</u>
State License No.	<u>56251</u>		

1 We hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said city in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

Use District Class..... Ordinance No.
Signature of Owner, Agent or Builder.

Fire Zone No. 1 580 Address 1152 Euclid Ave., Berkeley

FOR DEPARTMENT USE ONLY

2705 Webster 196 Permit No. 62610

Number Street Page

Filed 6/23 Ready Checked by Date Issued 1-21-98



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 16
Midgley Building
2999 College Avenue



The Midgley Building, 2999 College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Address:** 2999 College Avenue
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 052-1567-06301
(Elmwood Park Tract, Block C, Lot 24)
Dimensions: 45 feet x 120 feet
Cross Streets: Ashby Avenue and Webster Street
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 11913
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
a. Building(s): Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
b. Landscape or Open Space: No
c. Historic Site: No
d. District: Yes
e. Other: Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Midgley Building, Elmwood Camera
Commonly Known Name: not known
6. **Date of Construction:** 1926 **Factual:** Yes
Source of Information: City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 24124, 17 February 1926
7. **Architect:** Van V. Midgley
8. **Builder:** Van V. Midgley
9. **Style:** Storefront
10. **Original Owners:** Van V. Midgley, 2999 College Avenue
Original Use: commercial (2 stores)
11. **Present Owner:** JCJ9 Property Management LLC & March Earl J Tr
Present Occupant: Picture Framing CP50 (2997 College); Cheap Pete's (2999 College)
12. **Present Use:** commercial (2 stores)
Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** C-E
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Excellent **Interior:** unknown **Grounds:** Ø
Has the property's exterior been altered? Yes

14. Description.

A one-story brick Class “C” building designed for two stores. Similar, but not identical to the Midgley-Jennings Building next door to the north. In 1964, the original brick façade was covered with ribbed, galvanized Robertson decking installed vertically. At the same time, the shopfronts were replaced with aluminum

and glass, flush with the plane of the façade. The three brick piers were resurfaced with mosaic tile in various shades of brown. The tile has been painted over with dark charcoal gray paint and the decking with a light gray. A bit of the original brick can be seen at the south edge of the building.

15. History.

Van Vissing Midgley was from Salt Lake City. He attended the University of Utah, married Deane Adler in 1913, and then headed to Oakland in 1915 to help his father run the American Theater at 17th and San Pablo. It was the largest movie theater on the West Coast. In 1923, the three Midgley sons were involved in a big real estate transaction in downtown Oakland. Out of it came the Midgley Building, long a landmark at 15th Street and San Pablo near City Hall.

In 1924, Van Midgley left the running of the theater to his brothers Rex and Charles, and entered the real estate business as a salesman for Joseph E. Caine, a commercial real estate agent. He and Deane bought a brand-new house that year at 2950 Claremont Avenue, one of the John Hudson Thomas-designed cottages that were part of the Claremont Crescent development. Soon, he used his new expertise to invest in property on College Avenue, buying Lots 24 and 25 in Block C of Elmwood Park. Midgley and Harold P. Jennings, a colleague at the Caine office, first improved Lot 25 in 1925.

Midgley, on his own, built on Lot 24 the next year, and for a short time had his own real estate office at 2999 College Avenue. In 1929 he left real estate to enter the field of stock brokering. Despite the Crash and subsequent depression, he made a success of it. In 1946, the Midgleys moved to Piedmont. They became patrons of the arts as supporters of the San Francisco Symphony and Opera.

The new Midgley Building was similar in style

to the first building next door. Both were reddish-brown pressed brick with terra cotta detailing, but arranged in a different way.

In 1932, the two stores were combined and the storefronts changed to have only one entrance. This was to accommodate August Machunze and his California Food Shop, which advertised “free delivery.” He had been born in Germany and came to America with his family as a child. In 1939 he married Loretta Erskine and they built a house on West View Drive, high above Tunnel Road, where they raised three children. August Machunze died in 1952 at age forty-nine. He had run his grocery store for about ten years.

In early 1943, Bernard W. and Frances A. White, proprietors of the Topside Market, purchased the Midgley Building. The first thing they did with it was not surprising, considering that it was the middle of World War II. The entire shop space was converted to living quarters for a family.

After the war, a long tradition of a camera shop in the space began with Alpha Photo Products, which remained until about 1952. In early 1954, the space was taken by Hiram Rosenkranz, who was a photographer and had grown up in Berkeley. He later added a photograph gallery to the shop. In the early 1980s the space changed hands and became Alpha Photo Camera Shop, and in 1988, the one large shop became two again when Alpha opened a frame shop at the north end of the building. Soon, the entire camera shop had moved into the smaller

space, and a framing shop opened in the other space. Cheap Pete's Framing Shop remains

in the Midgley Building today, making use of both of the two shops.

16. Significance.

The Midgley Building is significant as a contributing building in the Elmwood commercial district. Its significance would be much more than merely a contributor to the scale of the district if the 1964 façade were to be removed.

Even the 1964 remodeling, which is now sixty-one years old, would have an aesthetic sig-

nificance, if it too had not been compromised.

The long-term businesses—the market, the photography shops, and the framing store—offer a cultural significance of well-regarded businesses that served the needs of the surrounding neighborhood.

Features to Preserve.

- the 1926 brick and terra cotta façade that is hidden behind a 1964 false façade.

17. Historic Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: No

Architectural Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

18. Is the property endangered? No

19. Bibliography.

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 24124, 17 February 1926; as well as several other applications for alterations.

Block books and Sanborn maps

Directories.

Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.

Ormsby Donogh Real Estate File (1939–1977), BAHA.

Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.

ancestry.com

“Van Midgley Joins Blyth & Co.,” *Oakland Tribune*, 21 May 1929.

“Van V. Midgley (obituary),” *Oakland Tribune*, 17 January 1978.

“In the Venerable Elmwood, Change is Now the Only Sure Thing” by Andy Whipple, *The Voice*, 25 August 1988.

Photo and caption regarding Hiram Rosenkranz, *Berkeley Gazette*, 12 May 1953.

20. Recorder

Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird, 2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

2 November 2025

Additional Photographs.



The Midgley Building, showing the mosaic tile piers and bulkhead. Anthony Bruce, 1982.



The Midgley Building, showing the original brick façade. Ormsby Donogh, 1939, Donogh Real Estate File, BAHABA/

Additional Photographs.



New Stores Erected by The Midgeley Company at 15th St. and San Pablo Ave.

The Midgley Building in downtown Oakland (since demolished). 1924 City Directory, page 176.



Cpl. Hiram A. Rosenkranz, right, of Berkeley, receives certificate of achievement from Maj. Gen. James M. Gavin, VII Corps commanding officer, at a ceremony in Stuttgart, Germany. Rosenkranz, son of Mrs. L. F. Rosenkranz, 3031 Fulton St., distinguished himself while serving as photo interpreter in intelligence work. He will return soon to US for release from active duty. —(U.P.) Army photo

Hiram Rosenkranz, Elmwood Camera Shop owner a few months before he opened the store. Berkeley Gazette, 12 May 1953.



PHOTO ART — Dave Clark's collection of 36 creative color scenes and leaf expressions are on display at the Elmwood Gallery, 2999 College Ave., through December. Also on display are eight black and white commercial prints of foods by Elmer Moss.

*Berkeley Gazette,
13 December 1972.*

WRITE IN INK

Application for Building Permit.

CLASS A-B AND C BUILDING

Application is hereby made to the Department of Buildings and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for permission to

Build a one story two room class C building.

on the West side of College Ave street 75 feet north of Webster street.

Being Lot No. 24 Block C Elmwood Park Tract.

According to plans and Specifications herewith submitted. All provisions of the Building Law will be complied with in the erection, of said building whether specified herein or not.

Estimated entire cost of building \$ 6000.00 Extreme height of building 21 ft.

Size of Lot 40 by 70 feet. Size of proposed building 40 ft. by 70 ft.

Building to be occupied as Mercantile Business by (No.) families.

	WALLS			PIERS OR COLUMNS		JOISTS			GIRDERS		
	HEIGHT	MATERIAL	THICKNESS SIZE FEET	MATERIAL	SIZE	MATERIAL	SIZE	LONGEST SPAN	MATERIAL	SIZE	LONGEST SPAN
Footings	<u>16"</u>	<u>Concrete</u>									
Foundations											
Basement		<u>See Plans</u>						<u>See Plans</u>			<u>See Plans</u>
1st story											
2nd story											
3rd story											
4th story											
5th story											
6th story											
7th story											
8th story											

Light shaft wall covering to be of

Roof covered with tar & gravel Pitch 12 x 12

Chimneys of 8 x 12 lined with terra cotta flue lining patent flues?

Gas grate flues to be patent chimney or brick?

Any dumb waiters or chutes? Any elevator (freight or passenger)?

Cove brackets will be used.

Name of Owner of Ground VAN V. MIDGLEY Res. Address 2999 COLLEGE AVE.

Name of Owner of Building VAN V. MIDGLEY Res. Address 2999 COLLEGE AVE.

Name of Lessee of Building Res. Address

Name of Architect or Designer VAN V. MIDGLEY Res. Address same

Name of Builder Same Res. Address same

I hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

2999 A+B College Ave. David Midgley
2-16-26 - 2-17-26 Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder.
 Address 2999 College Ave
Phone Book 4631

This Permit expires one year from date unless sooner revoked by the City Council.

Date FEB 17 1926 Permit No. 24124

Berkeley Print  West Berkeley

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 24124, 17 February 1926



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 17
Midgley-Jennings Building
2995 College Avenue



Midgley-Jennings Building, 2995 College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Address:** 2995 College Avenue
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 052-1567-06401
(Elmwood Park Tract, Block C, Lot 25)
Dimensions: 50 feet x 120 feet
Cross Streets: Ashby Avenue and Webster Street
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 11914
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
 - a. **Building(s):** Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
 - b. **Landscape or Open Space:** No
 - c. **Historic Site:** No
 - d. **District:** Yes
 - e. **Other:** Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Midgley-Jennings Building
Commonly Known Name: King Yen
6. **Date of Construction:** 1925 **Factual:** Yes
Source of Information: City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 21600, 22 July 1925
7. **Architect:** Van V. Midgley (designer), 2950 Claremont Avenue
8. **Builder:** Dunnie Construction Co., 3151 Broadway, Oakland
9. **Style:** Storefront
10. **Original Owners:** Van V. Midgley and Harold P. Jennings, First National Building, Oakland
Original Use: commercial (3 stores)
11. **Present Owner:** JLTsou LLC
Present Occupant: King Yen (2995 College)
12. **Present Use:** commercial (1 store)
Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** C-E-
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Excellent **Interior:** Excellent **Grounds:** Ø
Has the property's exterior been altered? Yes

14. Description.

Built in 1925, this is a Class “C” one-story brick building designed to have three shops. It has been altered to one large store for at least sixty years. A 1964 remodel for Benson’s Sporting Goods covered the upper half in ribbed, galvanized Robertson decking, installed vertically and painted blue. The four brick piers and the bulkheads were surfaced with blue and white mosaic tile. The shopfronts were all modernized.

An award-winning restoration for King Yen in 1989 revealed all the original brickwork, even on the piers. Today, the building looks much as it did when new, except for the storefronts, which were created new to accommodate restaurant use. The center entrance bay is recessed with room for a few tables for outdoor seating. The flanking bays have high bulkheads faced with glossy, celadon green square tiles. Above, four pairs of wood-frame windows can be opened in warm weather.

15. History.

Van Vissing Midgley was from Salt Lake City. He attended the University of Utah, married Deane Adler in 1913, and then headed to Oakland in 1915 to help his father run the American Theater at 17th and San Pablo. It was the largest movie theater on the West Coast. In 1923, the three Midgley sons were involved in a big real estate transaction in downtown Oakland. Out of it grew the Midgley Building, long a landmark at 15th Street and San Pablo near City Hall.

In 1924, Van Midgley left the running of the theater to Rex and Charles, and entered the real estate business as a salesman for Joseph E. Caine, a commercial real estate agent. He and his wife bought a brand-new house that year at 2950 Claremont Avenue, one of the John Hudson Thomas-designed cottages that were part of the Claremont Crescent development. Soon, he used his new expertise to invest in property

The façade is of warm-brown pressed brick in different shades. Bricks laid on end create rectangular panels above each shopfront bay. There is sand-colored terra cotta ornamentation, such as the building’s cornice and an elaborate frieze above the transom windows. Square terra cotta tiles with an oak-leaf design in relief accentuate the piers, both in their being set between the rectangular panels above each pier and by being grouped together in threes to create pendants at the top of each pier.

The distinctive transom windows survived the 1964 remodel. Each of the three sets of transoms consists of a horizontal window in the center, divided horizontally. The center windows are flanked by two pairs of vertical windows divided artistically into small panes.

on College Avenue, buying Lots 24 and 25 in Block C of Elmwood Park. Midgley and Harold P. Jennings, a colleague at the Caine office, first improved Lot 25 in 1925 with an attractive pressed brick shop building. Midgley, on his own, built on Lot 24 the next year, and for a short time had his own real estate office at 2999 College Avenue. In 1929 he left real estate to enter the field of stock brokering. Despite the Crash and subsequent depression, he made a success. In 1946, the Midgleys moved to Piedmont. They became patrons of the arts as supporters of the San Francisco Symphony and Opera.

The College Avenue buildings were sold soon after they were built. Over the years, the Midgley-Jennings Building has been home to two long-lived and beloved Elmwood businesses. In November 1947, Volney Benson opened Benson’s Sporting Goods at 2995 College Ave-

nue, which specialized in ski, tennis, and action wear, as well as all types of sporting equipment. Mrs. Benson, “Jonsie,” was buyer for the store for most of its existence. After commercial rent control (which began in the Elmwood) was abolished by the State, rents began to rise on College Avenue. Several Elmwood businesses could not afford a rent increase; Benson’s was one of them. After forty-one years, Benson’s Sporting Goods closed in September 1988.

The other long-time business is King Yen restaurant, which opened in the Sparhawk Building about 1969. After twenty years in that location and after Benson’s had moved out, the restaurant owners took on the ambitious project of restoring the façade of the Midgley Building as the new setting for the restaurant. Fog City Architects was chosen to oversee the work. The restaurant was settled into its handsome new

building by 1990. In 1991 the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association gave King Yen a preservation award. The citation reads, “An award was given for restoring the façade by removing aluminum siding and uncovering the elaborate clerestory windows. In addition, blue ‘bathroom’ tile was removed, revealing the brick piers. Although the original shopfronts had been removed, new shopfronts were designed which are sensitive to the overall design of the building. The owners are also commended for the installation of quiet, unobtrusive, and well-designed signage.”

In 1993, King Yen was given an award for Historic Commercial Renovation by Berkeley Design Advocates, as part of the group’s first awards presentation. King Yen continues to thrive after fifty-six years.

16. Significance.

The Midgley-Jennings Building is primarily significant as an excellent example of historic preservation. Exposing the richly colored and textured façade of reddish-brown pressed brick and ornamental terra cotta that had been hidden from view for so many years added much to the traditional appearance of the Elmwood commercial district. The building continues to delight all who see it.

The Midgley-Jennings Building is significant as one of only three brick buildings in the district and one of the most distinctive designs. It was built during the second wave of construction which began in 1920, after WWI. This block of College (east side, between Ashby and Webster) was not built until then. The two Midgley buildings, along with the service station, were the last ones built on the block.

Features to Preserve.

- the terra cotta ornamentation
- the unpainted pressed-brick façade
- the four brick piers
- the transoms

17. Historic Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes
Architectural Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

18. Is the property endangered? No

19. Bibliography.

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 21600, 22 July 1925; as well as several other applications for alterations.

Block books and Sanborn maps

Directories. Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.

Ormsby Donogh Real Estate File (1939–1977), BAHA.

Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.

“A Profile of the Elmwood: Trends and Counter-Trends in a Berkeley Neighborhood Commercial District” Joanna Callenbach, Geography 181 class paper, Spring 1978.

ancestry.com

“Van Midgley Joins Blyth & Co.,” *Oakland Tribune*, 21 May 1929.

Advertisement for opening of Benson’s Sporting Goods, *Berkeley Gazette*, 7 November 1947.

“Van V. Midgley (obituary),” *Oakland Tribune*, 17 January 1978.

“Cook of the Week: Jonsie Benson” by Pauline Metza, *Berkeley Gazette*, 12 October 1982.

“In the Venerable Elmwood, Change is Now the Only Sure Thing” by Andy Whipple, *The Voice*, 25 August 1988.

“Changing Times on College Ave.” by William Brand, *Oakland Tribune*, 6 September 1988.

“Elmwood Renovation Delights Merchants,” by Charles Bucher, Jr., *Berkeley Voice*, 16 November 1989.

“1991 BAHA Preservation Awards,” *BAHA Newsletter*, No. 74, Summer-Fall 1991.

Berkeley Design Advocates awards announcement, *Oakland Tribune*, 9 December 1993.

20. Recorder

Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird, 2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

1 November 2025

Additional Photographs.

*Midgley-Jennings Building, 2995 College Avenue, as it looks today.
Anthony Bruce, 2025.*



Midgley-Jennings Building, 2995 College Avenue, soon after restoration. The doors on the right were for the short-lived Elmwood Fish Market.

Anthony Bruce, 1990.



*Midgley-Jennings Building, 2995 College Avenue, showing its 1964 Benson's Sporting Goods remodel.
Anthony Bruce, 1982.*

Additional Photographs.

*Midgley-Jennings Building, 2995 College Avenue.
Ormsby Donogh, 1939, Donogh Real Estate File, BAHA..*



Midgley-Jennings Building, 2995 College Avenue. A bit of the Midgley Building shows at the right.

Ormsby Donogh, 1939, Donogh Real Estate File, BAHA..

Closeup of detail of the Midgley-Jennings Building. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

Additional Photographs.



The Midgley Building in downtown Oakland (demolished). 1924 City Directory, page 176.

*Interior of the newly opened Benson's Sporting Goods at 2997 College Avenue.
Byron Bolfig, November 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.*



*Van Vissing Midgley in 1955.
Oakland Tribune, 17 January 1978.*

*Volney Benson at Benson's Sporting Goods.
Berkeley Gazette, 24 July 1956.*

WRITE IN INK

Application for Building Permit.

CLASS A-B AND C BUILDING

Application is hereby made to the Department of Buildings and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for permission to build a one story (3) stories room class C building.

on the East side of College St 115 feet N. of W. Bates street.

Being lot No. 25 Block C Elmwood Park Tract.

According to plans and specifications herewith submitted. All provisions of the Building Law will be complied with in the erection, of said building whether specified herein or not.

✓ Estimated entire cost of building \$ 7,600.00 Extreme height of building 21 ft.

Size of Lot 50 by 120 feet. Size of proposed building 50 ft. by 60 ft.

Building to be occupied as Stores by (No.) families.

	WALLS			PIERS OR COLUMNS		JOISTS			GIRDS		
	HEIGHT	MATERIAL	THICKNESS S. or P. or I.	MATERIAL	SIZE	MATERIAL	SIZE	LONGEST SPAN	MATERIAL	SIZE	LONGEST SPAN
✓ Footing	24"	Concrete	24" x 24"			Wood	2x6	16'	Steel	20" x 10"	15' 2"
✓ Foundation	24"	"	12" x 18"			2x6	2x6	16'			
Basement											
1st story	10' 6"	Concrete	12" x 12"								
2nd story	9' 6"	Concrete	8" x 12"								
3rd story											
4th story											
5th story											
6th story											
7th story											
8th story											

Light shaft wall covering to be of

Roof covered with Asph + Shingle

Pitch

Chimneys of Brick lined with

any patent flues?

Gas grate flues to be patent chimney or brick?

Any dumb waiters or chutes?

Any elevator (freight or passenger)

Cave brackets will be solid.

Name of Owner of Ground V. H. Haggerty - H. P. Jennings Address 323-6 1st Hill Bldg., Oakland

Name of Owner of Building

Res. Address

Name of Lessee of Building

Res. Address

Name of Architect or Designer Paul H. Haggerty

Bus. Address 323-6 1st Hill Bldg., Oakland

Name of Builder Donnie Const. Co.

Bus. Address 3151 Broadway, Oakland

I, Paul H. Haggerty, hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder.

Address 323-6 1st Hill Bldg., Oakland

✓ This Permit expires one year from date unless sooner revoked by the City Council.

Date

Permit No.

21600



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 18
Morris Building
2993 College Avenue



The Morris Building, 2993 College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Address:** 2985, 2987, 2989, 2991, 2993 College Avenue
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 052-1567-06500
(Elmwood Park Tract, Block C, Lot 26 and 5 feet of Lot 27)
Dimensions: 60 feet x 120 feet
Cross Streets: Ashby Avenue and Webster Street
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 11915
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
a. Building(s): Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
b. Landscape or Open Space: No
c. Historic Site: No
d. District: Yes
e. Other: Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Morris Building
Commonly Known Name: not known
6. **Date of Construction:** 1922 **Factual:** Yes
Source of Information: City of Berkeley Application for Building Permits No. 11964, 6 June 1922 and No. 12785, 9 October 1922.
7. **Architect:** Solomon Morris
8. **Builder:** Solomon Morris
9. **Style:** Storefront
10. **Original Owners:** Solomon Morris, 1424 Jefferson Street, Oakland
Original Use: commercial (5 stores)
11. **Present Owner:** Di Napoli William & Harris Marc; Barrett William S & Thatcher Ellen et al; Di Napoli William W; Nishimura Jodi; Di Napoli William W [5 condominiums]
Present Occupant: State Flour Pizza Company (2985 College); Gordo Tacos (2987 College); Crosscountry Mortgage (2989 College); vacant (2991 College); Kaokao (2993 College)
12. **Present Use:** commercial (5 stores)
Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** C-E
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Excellent **Interior:** unknown **Grounds:** Ø
Has the property's exterior been altered? Minimally

14. Description.

Built in 1922, this is the second of two almost identical side-by-side shop buildings. The Morris Building is a one-story wood-frame structure with a concrete-veneered front wall, designed for five shops. The northernmost shop is slightly narrower than the others; it was an addition as the building was nearing completion. The building is almost entirely intact with all five shopfronts unaltered. It features a lavish display of tile work, identical to that on the earlier Sager Building.

Each shop is framed in polychrome glazed terra cotta sections in a relief motif of flowers and vines. The three large rectangular panels above the transoms are also framed in the same tile; and it is repeated from sidewalk to cornice at each end of the building. The panels are filled with tan stucco. Originally, they featured del-

icate stucco relief work of an elaborate floral motif. These reliefs were still intact into the 1950s. The cornice is also made of sections of glazed terra cotta, and it projects slightly at the top of the four piers, which rest on high bases.

Large transoms contain a combination of arched, circular, square, and rectangular panes. All are intact except for the north shop's which are plan glass panes.

Each shopfront has a central recessed entry with traditional door with glass center panel. Each entry is almost a miniature arcade entrance with large plate glass display windows set in copper Kawneer framing. The bulkheads are surfaced with square tiles and mosaic tile borders. There is also mosaic tile paving in the entries. Doors are replacements. Awning boxes have been covered over.

15. History.

In April 1922, contractor Solomon Morris took out a permit to build 2979 College next door for Olive Sager. In June, he took out a permit for this building—his own—at 2993 College. In October, he took out a third permit. This was for a single shopfront addition to his building that was still under construction. The story passed down through the years was that a driveway had originally been intended for the space between the two buildings. This last shopfront is slightly narrower than the others. When construction was complete, the effect that this was one long structure instead of three was seamless.

Contractor Solomon Morris (originally, Schidkavar) was born in 1866 in either Poland or Russia. Through a circuitous route, he and his wife Anna (Annie) arrived by ship in San Francisco in 1904 with their children. They had lived in England for many years (most of their children born there) and South Africa for a few years before their arrival. They settled at

first in Bakersfield where Solomon worked as a contractor. After twenty-two years of marriage, Anna and Solomon were divorced in 1910. A few years later, Solomon moved to Oakland, receiving favorable mention in the real estate pages of the *Oakland Tribune* in 1918. Son Albert was also a contractor in Oakland, and the home base in the 1920s was a house on Quigley. After the move north, Solomon early on took up residence at the respectable Hotel Savoy, 1424 Jefferson Street at 15th. In 1928, Solomon married Mrs. Rebecca Pearce of San Francisco, whom he had known for quite some time. Solomon Morris was living alone at the Hotel Commando on O'Farrell when he died in 1944 at age seventy-eight.

Solomon Morris seems to have had a lively career in Oakland, but designed and built only seven buildings in Berkeley. The College Avenue shop buildings have the most architectural distinction. Although he also built two rather intriguing "blocky" apartment houses.

With five shops in the Morris Building—and with at times, rapid turnover—one would be hard-pressed to determine the types of businesses that had been in the building over the years. The first businesses included A. K. Felk’s Premier Cleaners & Dyers, Hilda Lindstrom’s hat shop, S. Sasaki’s Merritt Embroidery Shop, and a Marinello beauty shop.

A long-time business in the building was Martha Ann’s Candies (sometimes known as Martha Ann’s Nuts or Martha Ann’s Nuts and Candy). It opened in 1930 by Samuel and Anna Martha Zierke, most likely with the “Martha Ann” name. By 1933 it was run by Mrs. Claudia Borklund, and she *did* call it “Martha Ann’s Nut Shop.” She soon opened a branch shop on Oakland’s Grand Avenue. Claudia and her husband John, a carpenter, took up residence in the back of the College Avenue shop. They were not the first Elmwood merchants to live where they worked. During the 1950s and 1960s, the shop is best remembered as a quiet, elegant, and rather prim establishment. Light gray walls set off the large glass jars filled with colorful penny candy. But this was not a store for children; the older woman who emerged through the curtain from the back was anything but effusive. This was the saleslady; the owner herself remained in the back of the shop making fresh batches of

candy. As Burl Willes writes in *Tales from the Elmwood*, “In 1970 Claudia Borklund, owner of Martha Ann Candies, decided it was time to retire. She had made all the candy herself behind a curtain in the back of the store, stirring the ingredients over a gas stove, then drying and cutting the sweets on marble-topped tables. Two of her customers in the 1930s were John Hadsell and his friend Jay T. Ward, who used to buy taffy and lemon drops on their way to the Saturday matinee.”

In 1971 the shop changed hands. Mrs. Borklund “passed the keys” to Burl Willes who had opened his travel shop in the Dondero Building the year before. He set up Trips Out Travel in the former candy shop, creating a relaxed environment with the waiting area set up as a cozy living room with old-fashioned furniture. His knowledgeable staff had the use of an intimate garden in the back which customers could glimpse through French doors. The ever-changing display windows were memorable. From vintage movie and travel posters to antique toy trains, passersby always paused in front of Trips Out Travel. Times changed, and the popular and successful business gave way to an on-line world in 2010.

16. Significance.

The Morris Building—along with its identical neighbor the Sager Building—is significant as a unique shop building in the Elmwood commercial district. Its glazed polychrome terracotta ornamentation is non-pareil along College Avenue, or in Berkeley for that matter.

The Morris Building is also significant for its high degree of integrity. All shopfronts are intact with original tile bulkheads. Missing are

the intricate stucco relief designs that were once in the upper panels.

The building is significant for two memorable long-term businesses that served the needs of the community.

Features to Preserve.

- the terra cotta ornamentation including the glazed flower vines, the cornice, the bases of the piers
- the unpainted terra cotta façade
- the unpainted stucco upper panels
- the transoms
- the original door at 2927 College
- the mosaic tile entrance paving
- the exceptional tile bulkheads

17. Historic Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes
Architectural Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

18. Is the property endangered? No

19. Bibliography.

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 12785, 9 October 1922; as well as several other applications for alterations.

Block books and Sanborn maps

Directories. Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.

Ormsby Donogh Real Estate File (1939–1977), BAHA.

Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.

Berkeley Tourist and Business Survey, 1924.

“A Profile of the Elmwood: Trends and Counter-Trends in a Berkeley Neighborhood Commercial District” Joanna Callenbach, Geography 181 class paper, Spring 1978.

ancestry.com

The World of Women, No. 28, 11 February 1934.

“Beauty in the Midst of Practicality” by Susan Dinkelspiel Stern for the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association, *Berkeley Gazette*, 13 May 1982.

20. Recorder

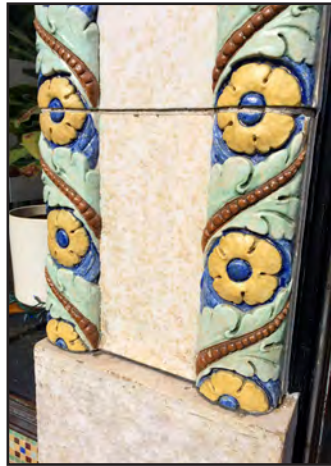
Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird, 2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

5 November 2025

Additional Photographs.



Floral glazed terra cotta, high pier base, and tile bulkhead: Morris Building. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Closeup of the floral glazed terra cotta: Morris Building. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Morris Building, southernmost shopfront. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Morris Building, 2985-93 College Avenue. Note the plain stucco panels, once filled with floral relief work. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

Additional Photographs.



Ad for Martha Ann's Nuts Shop at 2987 College Avenue. The World of Women, No. 28, 11 February 1934.



The Morris Building; Martha Ann's Nuts & Candy at 2987 College Avenue.
Ormsby Donogh, 1939, Donogh Real Estate File, BAH.



left and below:

The Morris Building (at the right), with Martha Ann's Candies at 2987 College Avenue in the 1950s. Showing relief panels. Donogh Real Estate File, BAH.



Additional Photographs.



*Mrs. Claudia Borklund of Martha Ann's Candies in front of her shop at 2987 College Avenue in the Morris Building.
Byron Bolfig, 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.*



Apartment building, 2716 Haste Street, designed and built by Solomon Morris in 1921.

Ormsby Donogh, 1939, Donogh Real Estate File, BAHA.

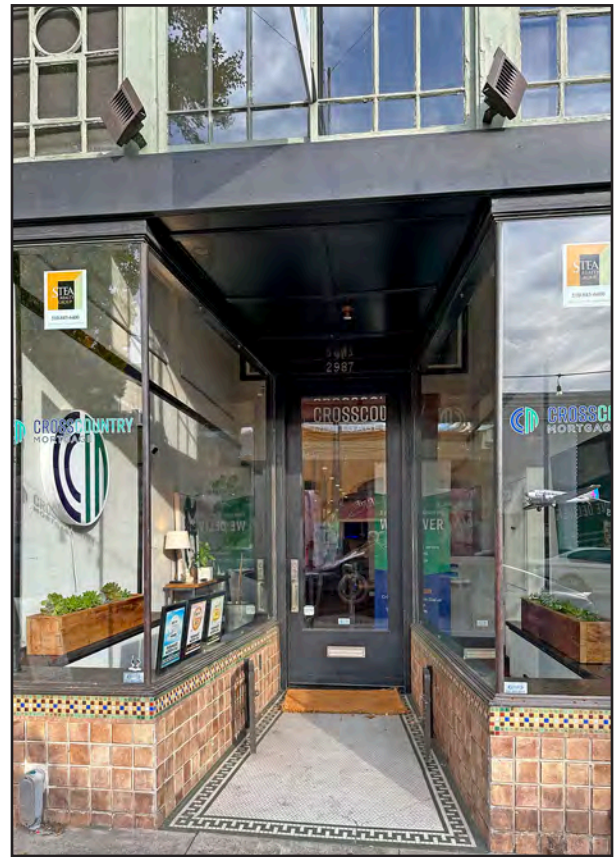


*The shopfront at 2987 College Avenue in the Morris Building when it was home to Trips Out Travel.
Anthony Bruce, 1979.*



*Close view of the terra cotta vines on the Morris Building.
Anthony Bruce, 2025.*

Additional Photographs.



The five intact shopfronts in the Morris Building. Left: 2985; right: 2987. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



The five intact shopfronts in the Morris Building. Left: 2989; center: 2991; right: 2993. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

WRITE IN INK

APPLICATION FOR BUILDING PERMIT FRAME BUILDING

Application is hereby made to the Department of Buildings and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for permission to build a one story 2 store room frame building, on the East side of College ave 175 feet front of ashby street, Being Lot No. 96 Block C, Belwood Park tract Tract

According to plans and specifications herewith submitted. All provisions of the Building Law will be complied with in the erection of said building whether specified herein or not.

Estimated entire cost of building 7,000.00

Building to be occupied as Stores by (No.) 1 families

Size of lot 55 by 190 feet.

Size of proposed building 50 ft. by 60 ft. Extreme height of building 20 ft.

Height in clear of cellar 16 ft. in. Height in clear of first story 16 ft. in.

Height in clear of second story 7 ft. in. Height in clear of third story 5 ft. in.

Foundation to be of (material) concrete (Thickness) 12 inches, greatest height of foundation 18 inches.

Width of footings 21 inches.

Mud sills 3 X 6 Main sills 18 X 21 Girders — X — Post

on piers — X — If piers are used give size 21 by — ft. on centers.

Size of underpinning X inches — inches O. C. Size of studs in first story 9 X 6 inches 16 inches O. C.

Size of studs in second story X inches — inches O. C. Size of studs in third story X inches — inches O. C.

Exterior wall coverings to be of plaster Light shaft wall coverings to be of —

All outside walls covered with shingles or plaster will be close boarded.

First floor joists concrete floor joists inches on centers. Longest span between supports — ft.

Second floor joists — X — inches on centers. Longest span between supports — ft.

Third floor joists — X — inches on centers. Longest span between supports — ft.

Ceiling joists 9 X 12 inches 16 inches on centers. Longest span between supports — ft.

Rafters 9 X 4 inches 16 inches on centers. Longest span between supports — ft.

Roof covered with gravel Steep or flat? Pitch 2 1/2 in 12

Studs in bearing partitions will be same as outside walls of each story.

Chimneys of no lined with — any patent flues?

Gas grate flues to be patent chimney or brick?

Any dumb waiters or chutes? — Any elevator (freight or passenger)? —

Cove brackets will be solid.

Name of Owner of Ground J. Morris Residence Address 1424 Jefferson St

Name of Owner of Building — Residence Address —

Name of Lessee of Building — Residence Address —

Name of Architect or Designer — Residence Address —

Name of Builder J. Morris Residence Address —

I hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

2985-87-89 Colby

Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder.

J. Morris
Address 1424 Jefferson St

This Permit expires one year from date unless sooner revoked by the City Council.

Date JUN - 6 1922

Permit No. 11964

Gillick Print.

Application for Building Permit

ALTERATION AND REPAIRS

Application is hereby made to the Department of Buildings and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for permission to

Build, Alter or Add to five story Store room frame Building
 Located in College and between 8th & Webster

All provisions of the Building Law will be complied with in the erection, alteration or repairing of said building whether specified herein or not.

Value 600.00

Building to be occupied as Store by (No.) one family

WRITE PLAINLY FULL DESCRIPTION OF WORK TO BE DONE

There is to be a addition on south part of lot 27
and on north part of lot 26 - Elmwood park tract
Berkeley, cal. size of Store 10 + 12.5 + 60 ft

Name of Owner J. Morris Residence Address 649 Mariposa ave

Name of Builder J. Morris Business Address 649 Mariposa ave

We hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

I do solemnly swear that the above is a true and full statement of all work to be done and of the cost thereof.

J. Morris
 Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder.

Address 649 Mariposa ave

 This permit expires one year from date unless sooner revoked by the City Council.

Date OCT -9 1922

Permit No. 12785

 Gillie's Print



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 19
Sager Building
2979 College Avenue



The Sager Building at 2979 College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Address:** 2979, 2981, 2983 College Avenue
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 052-1567-06600
(Elmwood Park Tract, Block C, Lot 27)
Dimensions: 40 feet x 120 feet
Cross Streets: Ashby Avenue and Webster Street
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 11916
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
a. Building(s): Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
b. Landscape or Open Space: No
c. Historic Site: No
d. District: Yes
e. Other: Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Sager Building
Commonly Known Name: not known
6. **Date of Construction:** 1922 **Factual:** Yes
Source of Information: City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit #11631.
12 April 1922
7. **Architect:** none shown on application
8. **Builder:** Solomon Morris, 1424 Jefferson Street, Oakland
9. **Style:** Storefront
10. **Original Owners:** Olive Sager, 604-14th Street, Oakland
Original Use: commercial (3 stores)
11. **Present Owner:** Hibbard Lisbeth A Trust
Present Occupant: Palm (2979 College); Pretty Penny Clothing (2981 College);
100% Pure (2983 College)
12. **Present Use:** commercial (3 stores)
Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** C-E
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Excellent **Interior:** unknown **Grounds:** Ø
Has the property's exterior been altered? Minimally

14. Description.

Built in 1922, this is the first of two almost identical side-by-side shop buildings. The Sager Building is a one-story wood-frame structure with a concrete-veneered front wall, designed for three shops. The building is almost entirely intact except for alterations to the three shopfronts, and it features a lavish display of tile work.

Each shop is framed in polychrome glazed terra cotta sections in a relief motif of flowers and vines. The three large rectangular panels above the transoms are also framed in the same tile; and it is repeated from sidewalk to cornice at each end of the building. The panels are filled

with golden-brown square tiles. The cornice is also made of sections of glazed terra cotta, and it projects slightly at the top of the four piers, which rest on high bases.

Large transoms contain a combination of arched, circular, square, and rectangular panes. The shopfronts have been changed, but appear somewhat traditional. The northernmost was redesigned in 1930 to move the entrance to the left, but it retains the original door. The two south shopfronts have white-painted grillwork to cover the entries when needed. All bulkheads have either been rebuilt or resurfaced. Awning boxes have been covered over.

15. History.

The Sager Building and the Morris Building next door are two of the most architecturally significant buildings in the Elmwood commercial district. The use of glazed polychrome terra cotta on the façades is exceptional. Sadly, the story of how these two sublime shop buildings came into being has proven somewhat elusive.

Olive May Faulkner was born in 1884 and grew up in a large family in Forbestown in the Sacramento Valley. She had always had an adventurous streak, as shown by the time, as a teenager, she and a girlfriend ran off to San Francisco to see the sights, leaving her mother frantically wondering where she was. After her father died in 1904, Olive (also known as "Ollie") struck out to seek her fortune. By the time that she reached Butte, Montana, she may or may not have been married several times. In Butte, she had a fresh start, marrying George Peris, a saloonkeeper, originally from Austria. In October 1914, Olive returned to California for an extended stay. In June the next year, George married, which he may have assumed he could do as his marriage with Olive was a common-law marriage. Neither the law nor Olive took kindly to his re-marriage. Olive returned to Butte to

discuss the situation with George; a tragic accident involving a revolver left Olive seriously injured and George dead. There was an inquest and a legal matter, complete with courtroom trial, to determine which widow was the legal widow. Olive was victorious, but as a compromise the estate was divided. Olive was beneficiary of two life insurance policies, and began running the saloon which was then hers, but which she soon found was illegal for her to enter during business hours as she was a woman. In 1917 she and her bartender Rudolph Charles Sagar, also of Austrian background, were married. By 1920 they were settled in the Hotel Savoy at 14th and Jefferson in Oakland, where Olive was the manager and Rudolph was the clerk. Two years later she built one of the prettiest commercial buildings on College Avenue.

It is hard to imagine Olive so suddenly deciding to invest her money (her inheritance from George Peris?) in property in Berkeley. Part of the answer may lie in the fact that Solomon Morris, the designer-builder, who built the two tiled buildings, was living at the Hotel Savoy during the time the Sagers were there. Perhaps it was his suggestion.

The handful of other buildings that Morris built in Berkeley are somewhat prosaic, and even though the Sager Building is a basic shop-front building, the way the exterior was treated shows real artistry. The materials used were of the finest quality. It may be that Olive Sager had something to say about the appearance of her investment, or Solomon Morris may have wanted to impress this exciting new client.

It would be nice to know whether Morris had already purchased the two lots on College before he met Olive, or did they buy them together? It appears that she was quite involved with the project and most likely visited the site often during construction. Her preference for tenants for the completed building was a “delicatessen or gent’s furnishings.” These would be in addition to her first tenant, Take Tory’s College Florist.

Within a few months of the start of Olive’s three-shop building in April 1922, Morris began the construction of his own building next door, with four shops. He intended to leave space for a driveway between the two, but in October 1922 he took out a third permit to fill the space in with a fifth shop. The eight shops are actually in three separate buildings, but they appear to the passerby as one long structure. There are only subtle differences between them. The Sager Building has large panels over the shopfronts that are filled with mottled brick-like tile. The Morris Building has stucco panels instead, that were originally filled with elaborate stucco reliefs of garlands and festoons.

16. Significance.

The Sager Building is significant for its lavish use of glazed polychrome terra cotta and tile applied in a most artistic manner. Framing the building, the upper panels, and the shopfronts themselves with a stylized flowering vine of green leaves and large yellow flowers with blue centers created a building both beautiful and fanciful.

Also, the Sager Building is framed at each end by a sidewalk-to-cornice edging of the floral terra cotta. By 1923, the completed Sager and Morris buildings added an extra richness of design and color to the already attractive street.

Olive Sager divorced her husband in 1924 and left Oakland. She married again in 1928 and three years later was left a widow. She died in a hospital near Stockton in 1937 at age fifty-three.

Contractor Solomon Morris (originally, Schidkavar) was born in 1866 in either Poland or Russia. Through a circuitous route, he and his wife Anna (Annie) arrived by ship in San Francisco in 1904 with their children. They settled at first in Bakersfield where Solomon was already a contractor. After their divorce, Solomon moved to Oakland, receiving favorable mention in the real estate pages of the *Oakland Tribune* in 1918. Son Albert was also a contractor in Oakland, and the home base in the 1920s was a house on Quigley. After the move north, Solomon early on took up residence at the respectable Hotel Savoy, 1424 Jefferson Street at 15th. In 1928, Solomon married Mrs. Rebecca Pearce of San Francisco, whom he had known for quite some time. Solomon Morris was living alone at the Hotel Commando on O’Farrell when he died in 1944 at age seventy-eight.

The Sager Building remains as a lasting legacy to both Olive Sager and Solomon Morris’ foresight to create a shop building that would still be a visual delight 100 years later.

The Sager Building is significant as one of the most creative buildings by Oakland designer-builder Solomon Morris; a design that has most certainly stood the test of time.

As with several of the shops in the Elmwood district, the Sager Building was affected by World War II. The shop at 2979 was changed to living quarters by then-owner Gwynn Officer, architect and real estate agent.

Features to Preserve.

- the terra cotta ornamentation including the glazed flower vines, the cornice, the bases of the piers
- the unpainted terra cotta façade
- the tiles set in the upper panels
- the transoms
- the original door at 2927 College
- the mosaic tile entrance to 2927 College dating from 1930

17. Historic Value— Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

Architectural Value— Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

18. Is the property endangered? No

19. Bibliography.

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 11631. 12 April 1922; as well as several other applications for alterations.

Block books and Sanborn maps

Directories. Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.

Ormsby Donogh Real Estate File (1939–1977), BAHA.

Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.

“A Profile of the Elmwood: Trends and Counter-Trends in a Berkeley Neighborhood Commercial District” Joanna Callenbach, Geography 181 class paper, Spring 1978.

ancestry.com

“Located the Missing Girls,” *Sacramento Bee*, 6 May 1902.

“A Tragic Ending of Long Romance,” *The Butte Miner*, 18 July 1915.

“Peris Inquest Looms up in a Lurid Manner.” *The Butte Miner*, 20 July 1915.

“Injured Woman Gets Peris’ Insurance,” *The Butte Miner*, 21 July 1915.

“Woman Owner of Saloon is Fined,” *The Butte Miner*, 30 March 1916.

“Wow! Look!—HOMES,” *Oakland Tribune*, 5 May 1918.

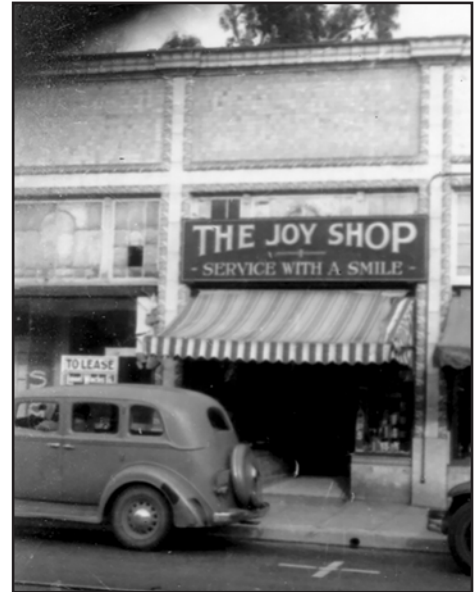
“Beauty in the Midst of Practicality” by Susan Dinkelspiel Stern for the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association, *Berkeley Gazette*, 13 May 1982.

20. Recorder

Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird, 2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

4 November 2025

Additional Photographs.



above and right: The Sager Building, showing that the two lefthand shopfronts had already been altered.
Ormsby Donogh, 1939, Donogh Real Estate File, BAH.



left and below:

The three shopfronts of the Sager Building (at the left), 2979 College Avenue, taken in the 1950s.

Donogh Real Estate File, BAH.



Additional Photographs.



Mosaic tile entry paving at 2979 College Avenue in the Sager Building. It dates from a 1930 alteration to the shopfront. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Olive May Faulkner Peris Sager at about age eighteen. Found online.



Apartment building, 2716 Haste Street, designed and built by Solomon Morris in 1921.

Ormsby Donogh, 1939, Donogh Real Estate File, BAHA.



Sager Building, detail. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



George Peris, Olive's husband, whose estate may have provided financing for the Sager Building. Butte Miner, 18 July 1915.

WRITE IN INK

APPLICATION FOR BUILDING PERMIT FRAME BUILDING

Application is hereby made to the Department of Buildings and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for permission to build a one story 3 Stores room frame Building on the front of college ave street of feet of street. Side Side Being Lot No. 1727 Block C Elmwood park Tract Tract

According to plans and Specifications herewith submitted. All provisions of the Building Law will be complied with in the erection of said building whether specified herein or not.

Estimated entire cost of Building 4000.00

Building to be occupied as Stores by (No.) 3 Stores families

Size of Lot 45 by feet

Size of proposed building 40 ft. by 60 ft. Extreme height of building 20 ft.

Height in clear of cellar 16 ft. in. Height in clear of first story 16 ft. in.

Height in clear of second story 16 ft. in. Height in clear of third story 16 ft. in.

Foundation to be of (material) concrete (Thickness) 10 inches, greatest height of foundation 18 inches.

Width of footings 14 inches.

Mud sills 3 X 6 Main sills 12 X 14 Girders 6 X 14 Post on piers 3 X 6 If piers are used give size 18x18 by 12 ft. on centers.

Size of underpinning X inches inches O. C. Size of studs in first story 2 X 6 inches 16 inches O. C.

Size of studs in second story X inches inches O. C. Size of studs in third story X inches inches O. C.

Exterior wall coverings to be of plaster Light shaft wall coverings to be of plaster

All outside walls covered with shingles or plaster will be close boarded.

First floor joists concrete inches inches on centers Longest span between supports 18' 5" ft.

Second floor joists X inches inches on centers Longest span between supports 18' 5" ft.

Third floor joists X inches inches on centers Longest span between supports 18' 5" ft.

Ceiling Joists 2 X 12 inches 16 inches on centers Longest span between supports 13' 5" ft.

Rafters 2 X 6 inches 14 inches in centers Longest span between supports 13' 5" ft.

Roof covered with gravel Steep or flat? 12x3 Pitch 12x3

Studs in bearing partitions will be same as outside walls of each story.

Chimneys of no lined with no any patent flues? no

Gas grate flues to be patent chimney or brick? no

Any dumb waiters or chutes? no Any elevator (freight or passenger)? no

Cove brackets will be solid.

Name of Owner of Ground Oline Sager Residence Address 604-14th St Oakland

Name of Owner of Building no Residence Address no

Name of Lessee of Building no Residence Address no

Name of Architect or Designer no Residence Address no

Name of Builder J. Morris Residence Address 1424- Jefferson Street

I hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

2973-75-79
College Ave.

J. Morris
Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder.
Address 1424 Jefferson Street

This Permit expires one year from date unless sooner revoked by the City Council.

Date APR 12 1922Permit No. 11631



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 20
Dray Building
2973 College Avenue



The Dray Building, 2973 College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Address:** 2973, 2975, 2977 College Avenue
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 052-1567-06700
(Elmwood Park Tract, Block C, approximately the southern third of Lots 1 and 2)
Dimensions: 45 feet x 120 feet
Cross Streets: Ashby Avenue and Webster Street
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 11917
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
 - a. **Building(s):** Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
 - b. **Landscape or Open Space:** No
 - c. **Historic Site:** No
 - d. **District:** Yes
 - e. **Other:** Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Dray Building
Commonly Known Name: not known
6. **Date of Construction:** 1922 **Factual:** Yes
Source of Information: City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 12006, 12 June 1922
7. **Architect:** none listed on the application
8. **Builder:** H. C. Pfrang, 5659 Ocean View Drive, Oakland
9. **Style:** storefront
10. **Original Owners:** Lester R. Dray, 545-53rd Street, Oakland
Original Use: commercial (2 stores)
11. **Present Owner:** College Avenue Building LLC
Present Occupant: Versailles (2973 College); Humbowl (2975 College); Manpuku (2977 College)
12. **Present Use:** commercial (3 stores)
Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** C-E
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Excellent **Interior:** unknown **Grounds:** Ø
Has the property's exterior been altered? Yes

14. Description.

A one-story building with cement plaster exterior. The decorative tile-roof overhang beneath the parapet wall with its narrow cornice and the cast-concrete medallions (removed) on the piers suggest the Spanish Colonial Revival style of the 1920s. Storefronts and transoms (except for the southernmost) have been altered. 1940s tile bulkheads were damaged in the 1970s when rough wooden lath was nailed into them, in a purposely uneven way, to evoke

the Hippie rustic aesthetic. All bulkheads now have the same celadon-green traditional tile. The two lefthand shopfronts have black aluminum doors. In 1938, the righthand shopfront was altered from a center entrance to a side entrance.

The building is divided into three storefronts. The 1939 photograph shows only two. The building permit application does not specify whether two or three stores were intended.

15. History.

The Dray Building's real claim to fame is that it was the site of the legendary Botts Ice Cream for fifty years and that it housed an early West Coast Piggly Wiggly groceteria.

The Dray Building was built in 1922 by Lester Robert Dray of Oakland. Dray had a varied career. When he was eighteen in 1906, he worked for the Denison News Company, located at the Oakland Pier. The company published postcards and souvenir items. Their employees worked at news stands and sold items on the local trains. While still in the employ of Denison, he married Dorothea Amorsen in about 1912. They lived on 53rd Street, raised two children, and owned a Chevrolet by 1919. When he built the College Avenue building, Dray was the manager of a grocery store. He seems to have also been involved in real estate ventures. He didn't own the building for more than a few years after building it.

A first tenant in the Dray Building was a Piggly Wiggly store at 2973. The company had been on the West Coast only since 1921. Piggly Wiggly was "invented" in 1916 by Clarence Saunders in Memphis, Tennessee, as the first self-service grocery store. Saunders patented his idea in 1917 and began issuing franchises. The Piggly Wiggly in the Dray Building was opened in the first year of the company's expansion to the West Coast. The company has had many slogans over the years: the one on this store was "All Over the World." In order

to accommodate a large grocery store, the two northern spaces were combined into one (or perhaps built that way for the tenant).

In May 1938, Mrs. Kimi Tory remodeled the shop at 2977, moving the center entrance to the left. She then moved the College Florist ("Fresh Cut Flowers, Potted Plants"), that the Tory family had started, to that location. It had been in the Sager Building since 1922. After February 1942 the florist had new ownership.

A bridal shop opened in the space at 2977 College around 1947, but closed soon after. In May 1948, John M. and Margaret Turner Botts spent \$2000 on alterations to the bridal shop in preparation for the opening of Botts Ice Cream. Margaret Botts was a San Francisco native and "Jack" Botts was from Fremont. He was a stock broker as well as a bond specialist for the U. S. Treasury Department. In 1946, he decided to retire from that way of life and start his own business. Little did the Botts' know that their shop would become one of the most iconic businesses in the history of the Elmhurst district. A purist and traditionalist, Mr. Botts wanted to make ice cream the best possible way, using real fruit instead of syrups and starting with a higher than required butterfat base. In a newspaper interview he stated that "ice cream making was a skill that benefited from close attention." Botts Ice Cream opened in 1948 and remained under the Botts' ownership until 1970. John Miner Botts died in 1979.

In about 1977, Scott Whidden, a high school student, got a part-time job at Botts making ice cream. He soon became as intrigued with making the finest ice cream as Mr. Botts had been, and in May 1979 he was given the position as manager by the absentee owner. In 1981, the

young Whidden, with two partners, purchased the business, and ran it successfully through good times and bad. Sadly, about fifty years since it first opened, Botts closed. Scott Whidden remains the owner of Fenton's Creamery in Oakland.

16. Significance.

The Dray Building is significant as a contributing building in the Elmwood commercial district. Its one-story height and its three traditional shopfronts help create the overall character of the street. With its tile-roof overhang, it is also one of the few 1920s buildings with a nod to the popular Spanish Colonial Revival style of the period.

The Dray Building is significant for its connection with the beginning of self-service grocery stores on the West Coast. One of the earliest Piggly Wiggly stores (created in Tennessee in 1916) on the West Coast and the second one in Berkeley, opened in the Dray Building on September 23, 1922.

The Dray Building is most significant as the location of one of the most popular ice cream shops in the East Bay. Botts Ice Cream opened in 1948 and remained in business for about fifty years. During its peak, the store had eight branches and 600 wholesale customers. Both the original owner, John Botts, and the last owner, Scott Whidden, felt compelled to make the very finest ice cream to offer the public. The response was overwhelming, and Botts lives on in the collective memory all its past customers.

Features to Preserve.

- the tile roof overhang (below the parapet)
- the transoms at 2977 College

17. Historic Value— Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

Architectural Value— Neighborhood: Yes City: No

18. Is the property endangered? No

19. Bibliography.

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 12006, 12 June 1922; as well as several other applications for alterations.

Block books and Sanborn maps

Directories.

Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.

Ormsby Donogh Real Estate File (1939–1977), BAHA.

Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.

“A Profile of the Elmwood: Trends and Counter-Trends in a Berkeley Neighborhood Commercial

District” Joanna Callenbach, Geography 181 class paper, Spring 1978.

ancestry.com

Wikipedia.

Piggly Wiggly advertisement, *Oakland Tribune*, 22 September 1922.

“Week’s Permits Total \$21,347,” *Berkeley Gazette*, 18 May 1948.

“Elmwood District Expands,” *Berkeley Gazette*, 11 May 1949.

Lester R. Dray obituary, *Oakland Tribune*, 13 July 1960.

John Botts obituary, *Berkeley Gazette*, 11 April 1979.

“Pure Botts: Young Man Keeps Tradition Alive” by Don McCormack, *Independent & Gazette*, 16 April 1981.

“Botts’ 21-Year-Old Owner: Just a Kid with Good Taste” by Andrew Ross, *San Francisco Examiner*, 6 October 1982.

“Ice Cream Parlor Whips up Rent Control Controversy” by Kathy O’Toole, *Oakland Tribune*, 17 November 1985.

“Elmwood Residents Battle Botts’ Owner over Zoning Law” by Roya Camp, *The Voice*, 22 October 1987.

“Rent Rise Endangers Elmwood Ice Cream” by Marc Breindel, 23 November 1995.

“Bott’s in Limbo; New Applicant Misses ZAB Hearing” by Sheila Holderness, 1 February 1996

“Botts Ice Cream to Serve Kids” by Marc Abbott, 12 March 1998.

20. Recorder

Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird,
2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

10 November 2025

Additional Photographs.



*The Dray Building.
Anthony Bruce, 2025.*



*The Dray Building, showing
the Botts Ice Cream sign.
Anthony Bruce, 1982.*



*The Dray Building, showing only
two shopfronts: the double space for
lease and the College Florist.
Ormsby Donogh, 1939, Donogh Real
Estate File, BAH.*

Additional Photographs.



*Superior Fabrics at 2973 College Avenue.
Byron Bolfig, 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.*



*Interior of Botts Ice Cream at
2977 College Avenue, show-
ing the iconic wallpaper and
rubber plant. The wallpaper
was installed about 1953 and
is remembered by customers
along with the ice cream.
Betty Marvin, 1983.*

*Scott Whidden serving custom-
ers at Botts Ice Cream, 2977
College Avenue.
Michael Russell, 1981,
Independent & Gazette.*

Additional Photographs.



Margaret Turner Botts.
Berkeley Daily Gazette, 28 September
1956.



Margaret Turner (Botts), on the left, and her two
sisters. 1926.

Grand opening advertisement for Piggly Wiggly at
2973 College Avenue.

Oakland Tribune, 22 September 1922.

PIGGLY WIGGLY

All Over the World

Opens Saturday, Sept. 23rd

**REMEMBER THE PLACE, 2973 COLLEGE
AVENUE, NEAR ASHBY
OPPOSITE STRAND THEATER**

A CARNATION FREE TO EACH VISITOR

This store is opened at the earnest solicitation of the people living in this section of the city. Let this be your store — Pay us a visit, and for so doing you will be handed a carnation.

This store will be the neighborhood pantry, where you can come and select with your own hands what you want. Over 2000 commodities of the best-known brands of Groceries, together with a full line of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables, always on hand.

A Million Satisfied Housewives Visit Piggly Wiggly Stores Daily. Remember that the Lowest Prices are Not on Time at Two Days, But on All Days.

Mrs. Housekeeper, You Are the Boss of Piggly Wiggly Stores

With its thousands of stores, its big warehouses, its fleets of trucks and thousands of employees all over the world.

Why choose what foods shall be bought. You have demanded that things be arranged for your own convenience. This store shall be as close as a neighborly friend, and you will never have to wait for a thing. You have insisted that we sell only the Nation's Best Food and at the lowest possible price, and that this have done.

PIGGLY WIGGLY has been a big success under your management. It is here to serve you.

**Examine the List Below and You Will Find a Very High Quality
of Goods Quoted at Extremely Low Prices**

IVORY SOAP— Large bar	11c	ARMOUR'S BACON— Half-pound package	25c
IVORY SOAP— Small bar	6½c	SHRIMP— Household	10c
GLACED PINEAPPLE— No. 2, 1 lb. can	30c	OSTERS— Household	13c
EGG SAUCE— New pack 1 lb. bottle	5c	HEAD MEAT— Half pound, Blue Pig	43c
ROYAL ANN CHERRIES— No. 2, 1 lb. can	33c	CREAM OF WHEAT— Per package	20c
ROYAL ANN CHERRIES— No. 1, 1 lb. can	20c	EGG OATS— Per package	12½c
RED RASPBERRIES— No. 2, 1 lb. can	25c	SHREDDED WHEAT— Per package	9½c
TATE MILK— Sweetened	8c	GRAPE NUTS— Per package	15c
INSTANT PORRIDGE— Large can	33c	CARNATION MUSH— Large package	25c
MAGNOLIA HAMS— Per pound	30c	FLAPJACK PANCAKE FLOUR— Large Albers	25c
PEACOCK BUCKWHEAT FLOUR—Large package	25c		

The Above Prices Apply to All Eastbay Piggly Wiggly Stores

STORE LOCATIONS THIS UNIT

2114 East 14th St., Oakland	3401 Broadway St., Oakland
1519 East St., Alameda	3284 Ashby St., Oakland
2200 Broadway, Oakland	2200 Broadway, Oakland
520 Webster Ave., Oakland	3114 Broadway St., Berkeley
4915 Broadway Ave., Oakland	2001 Broadway St., Berkeley
411 12th St., Oakland	1414 Broadway St., San Francisco
Van Ness Blvd. and 24th Ave.	

2973 COLLEGE AVENUE, NEAR ASHBY

WRITE IN INK

APPLICATION FOR BUILDING PERMIT FRAME BUILDING

Application is hereby made of the Department of Buildings and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for permission to build a 1 story Stone room frame Building on the East side of College Ave street 75 feet S. of Ashby street, Being Lot No. _____ Block _____ Trust _____

According to _____ and specifications herewith submitted. All provisions of the Building Law will be complied with in the erection of said building whether specified herein or not.

Estimated entire cost of building \$8000.00

Building to be occupied as Stores by 4Men _____

Size of lot 45 by 110 feet.

Size of proposed building 45 ft. by 80 ft. Extreme height of building 15 ft.

Height in clear of cellar _____ ft. _____ in. Height in clear of first story 12 ft. _____ in.

Height in clear of second story _____ ft. _____ in. Height in clear of third story _____ ft. _____ in.

Foundation to be of (material) Concrete (Thickness) 12 inches, greatest height of foundation 12 inches.

Width of footings 16 inches.

Mad sills 2 x 6 Main sills _____ Girders _____ Post _____

on piers _____ If piers are used give size 18x18 by _____ ft. on centers.

Size of underpinning 6 inches _____ inches O. C. Size of studs in first story _____ inches _____ inches O. C.

Size of studs in second story _____ inches _____ inches O. C. Size of studs in third story _____ inches _____ inches O. C.

Exterior wall coverings to be of Plaster Light shaft wall coverings to be of _____

All outside walls covered with shingles or plaster will be close boarded. Frame Plaster

First floor joists 2 x 4 _____ inches on centers. Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Second floor joists _____ inches _____ inches on centers. Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Third floor joists _____ inches _____ inches on centers. Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Ceiling joists 2 x 4 _____ inches _____ inches on centers. Longest span between supports 22-6 ft.

Rafters 2 x 6 _____ inches _____ inches on centers. Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Roof covered with Shingles Pitch _____

Studs in bearing partitions will be same as outside walls of each story.

Chimneys of _____ lined with _____ any patent flues?

Gas grate flues to be patent chimney or brick? _____

Any dumb waiters or chutes? _____ Any elevator (freight or passenger)? no

Cover brackets will be solid.

Name of Owner of Ground L. R. Gray Residence Address 545-53rd St. Oakland

Name of Owner of Building _____ Residence Address _____

Name of Lessee of Building _____ Residence Address _____

Name of Architect or Designer _____ Residence Address _____

Name of Builder H. C. Gray Residence Address 5659 Ocean View Drive

I hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

2972-2977 College Ave. H. C. Gray
Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder

Address _____

This Permit expires one year from date unless sooner revoked by the City Council.

Date JUN 12 1922 Permit No. 12006

Gillick Print.

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 12006, 12 June 1922



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 21
Romie Building
2961 College Avenue



The Romie Building, 2961 College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Address:** 2961, 2963, 2965, 2967, 2969 College Avenue
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 052-1567-06800
(Elmwood Park Tract, Block C, Lot 1)
Dimensions: 75 feet x 75 feet
Cross Streets: Ashby Avenue and Webster Street
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 11918
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
a. Building(s): Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
b. Landscape or Open Space: No
c. Historic Site: No
d. District: Yes
e. Other: Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Romie Building
Commonly Known Name: not known
6. **Date of Construction:** 1921-22 **Factual:** Yes
Source of Information: City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 11027, 7 December, 1921
7. **Architect:** Hutchison & Mills, Oakland
8. **Builder:** Leslie R. Wilson, 2216 Blake Street
9. **Style:** Storefront
10. **Original Owners:** Frederick E. Romie, 418 Newton Avenue, Oakland
Original Use: commercial (5 stores)
11. **Present Owner:** Kidson Jeremy M etal
Present Occupant: Golden Gate Sotheby's (2961 College); Miharuru Ice Cream (2965 College); vacant (2967 College); J. Brooker Studio (2669 College)
12. **Present Use:** commercial (4 stores)
Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** C-E
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Excellent **Interior:** unknown **Grounds:** Ø
Has the property's exterior been altered? Yes

14. Description.

A one-story, wood-frame structure with cement plaster exterior containing five shopfronts. It was originally designed in ornate Gothic style with a row of finials atop the parapet, engaged Gothic columns between the shops, and a frieze above the transoms of applied columns and Gothic arches. The ornamentation was removed in 1951. The engaged columns remain, but without their capitals, and the outline of the frieze is visible in the stucco. The many-paned transoms with colored glass have also survived. Each transom was divided into three sections

by turned wood pieces until a recent alteration replaced them with flat wood dividers.

The northernmost shopfront has been altered most extensively. Its bulkhead had been resurfaced with exceptional black-and-white tile which survived until 1977. At that time, for a new bank tenant, the shopfront below transom level was pushed back into the building, creating a covered entry plaza. This configuration has survived through subsequent tenants. The building is currently painted dark charcoal gray.

15. History.

In 1922, the Berkeley Bank of Savings and Trust Company and the First National Bank of Berkeley were purchased by the Mercantile Trust Company. One of the first moves of the new company was to establish two additional branch banks besides the already existing South Berkeley and Telegraph branches.

For their fourth location, the just-completed Romie Building in the rapidly growing Elmwood district in the heart of “a thickly populated residential area” was chosen for the new bank. Here, a new concept in banking was undertaken: that of a “residential bank.” Residents who worked in San Francisco were able to make deposits in that city and have the amounts transferred to the Elmwood branch where they could be drawn for household needs.

Much attention was focused on the decor, which was intended to appeal to the artistic sense of the customers. Walls were “finished in soft tones of green, with the woodwork in ivory.” The bank also included features “which will prove of interest to women,” especially the lounge, which would be a “rest-room and meeting place for the women of the district, which the bank plans to serve.” Already, with the opening of the branch bank, officials were contemplating a building solely for banking purposes. In 1922 the corner of Webster was

under consideration (where the Tullanian building now stands). By 1923, the bank had purchased instead the northeast corner of College and Ashby for the new building.

This attractively appointed bank was housed in a double shopfront in the Romie Building. The Gothic-inspired structure was built by Berkeley plumber-turned-contractor Leslie R. Wilson and Oakland real estate developer and contractor Frederick E. Romie, who were responsible for a number of small-scale commercial buildings in outlying business districts. For this building (and their others), they commissioned the Oakland architectural firm of (Robert A.) Hutchison and (Reginald L.) Mills.

The Romie Building, begun in late 1921, is a good example of the architects’ use of historical detail; to create a distinctive building, which contributes to the character of the surroundings. The Gothic flavor was achieved through such surface ornamentation as a frieze of Gothic arches running along the top third of the building, and polygonal columns dividing the building into five shopfronts. The row of finials of uneven height rising above the cornice gave the building an especially “spikey” Gothic silhouette against the sky. Tile-covered bulkheads and multi-paned transoms above the awning box were standard at the time.

Over the years the individual shopfronts in the Romie Building have been remodeled, and, in 1951, the Gothic ornamentation was removed and transoms covered with signs or awnings. All that remains to suggest the architectural style of the original design are the Gothic columns (with their capitals removed) and a rough outline in the stucco of the frieze of applied arches.

Frederick Ernest Romie was often involved in building ventures with contractor Leslie Ramsey Wilson and architects Hutchison & Mills. Romie was also a building contractor and was in the real estate investment business as well, although he started out as a draftsman and designer. The Romie family had been in California since about 1840, having come from Germany by way of Mexico, and settling in Monterey. Frederick's uncle had owned the Paraiso Springs resort near Soledad, which he left to Frederick and his brother Karl. Being yet minors, their father sold the resort soon after. After a problematic first marriage, Romie married Doris Rose Wilson, sister of Leslie Wilson. They had one son, Frederick, Jr., and they settled in North Berkeley in 1926.

Before the ivory paint was even dry on the bank's woodwork, F. E. Romie sold the property to Charles C. Dorsch, owner of the Dorsch Glove House in downtown Oakland and a real estate investor. Dorsch was ecstatic about his purchase, saying, "I bought this property because I see a tremendous future for the east bay. It happens that this particular district where this property is located is one of the fastest growing districts in Berkeley. The stores are occupied and bring a good return on the investment."

The original stores included the Quality Bakery in the corner space. It was run by Maud Lachmund and Paul McLaughlin, who was manager of the Hotel Harrison in Oakland. Maud was the wife of sculptor Otto Lachmund. At the time of the bakery, the Lachmunds lived at 2646 Russell, one of the apartment buildings built by

John Bischoff in 1921. The Quality Bakery had a short lifespan of only a year or two.

The other original business that Charles Dorsch got with the purchase of the Romie Building was the Pon Honor Groceteria, which, like the bank, had two shopfronts. C. A. McAllister and George E. Archambeault were friends since they attended school together in Modesto. They opened a successful small grocery in Ceres and two years later arrived in Oakland to repeat their success. With World War I, the partners sensed a need for economy on the part of customers and so changed the business model of their grocery. It became a "cash and carry" store, meaning neither credit nor deliver service was offered. They were able to keep prices down. The store was an instant success and by 1922 there were fifteen Pon Honors in the East Bay. The store in the Romie Building was No. 12. Archambeault explained the philosophy, "We selected the name of 'Pon Honor' because it would describe our way of doing business, namely, strictly on an honor basis. We stand on our honor to give the best goods for the least money. We also put our customers on their honor by letting them wait on themselves." It was said that merchants always welcomed a Pon Honor store because it meant better business for the district as a whole. The Elmwood district had a Piggly Wiggly and a Pon Honor right next door to each, two pioneering businesses that paved the way for modern supermarkets.

Other businesses of note that were located in the Romie Building included a Safeway supermarket, which used the two spaces that had originally been taken up by the bank. Safeway was in that space beginning in 1939. Strangely, the large building at Russell and College that had been a Piggly Wiggly when built in 1932 was also a functioning Safeway at the same time as this smaller store.

In 1929, the corner space was remodeled into one of seven Margaret Burnham's Cottage Candies shops in Oakland and Berkeley. The

stand-alone shop at 4632 Telegraph in Oakland was later home to Hooper's Chocolates. The distinctive, vertically set, black and white tile bulkheads were a Margaret Burnham signature; the tiles remained in place until 1977.

In 1932, the former bank space was remodeled by Charles Dorsch to accommodate the chain store, Public Food Stores. The exterior was altered to create one central entrance and the very colorful orange and black tile bulkheads (seen in the 1947 photo) were probably created at that time. Orange and black tile had been used by Pon Honor to distinguish their stores; in 1928 Pon Honor was sold to Public Food Stores, Inc. of San Francisco.

In 1944, Frank Gallardo's upholstery business took over the supermarket space. The business later moved to 2642 Ashby in 1950 and was run by Frank's son Jim Gallardo until 1997.

In 1977, a branch of City Federal Savings moved into the Romie Building in the corner space, and once again a banking institution was established in the building. City Federal Savings was established in Oakland in 1980 as a

minority savings and loan. Architect Ted Moulton proposed a remodeling for the branch that uncovered the amber-hued transoms, accentuated the columns through a new paint scheme, and created a plaza-like entrance, thus returning to College Avenue some of its old elegance.

Two other businesses of note were La Floreria, a florist that was in the corner shop for many years, and Jeremy Kidson's innovative "horizontal department store" that was planned to fill the five shopfronts but ran afoul of the Elmwood's quota system.

The Romie Building was the first built on this block of College, and naturally the corner lot was chosen for this venture. With the Romie Building, this central intersection of the Elmwood district was anchored on three corners. It would be four more years before the present Wells Fargo building would complete the job of creating a prosperous-looking "four corners."

End note: In 1915 architect Walter Parker applied for a permit for a \$35,000 three-story apartment building with stores on the ground floor for this corner, which was not built.

16. Significance.

The Romie Building is significant as an example of the quality shop buildings built in Oakland and Berkeley by architects Hutchison & Mills and builder Leslie R. Wilson. Much of its ornament has been lost, but enough of the design remains to give the building distinction.

The one-story building is significant as a contributor to the scale of the Elmwood commercial district.

The Romie Building is significant for the early local chain stores that were located here: Margaret Burnham Cottage Candies (founded in 1922), Pon Honor (founded in 1918), and Public Food Stores, Inc. (founded in 1920).

Features to Preserve.

- the engaged columns between the shopfronts
- the traditional shopfronts
- the small-paned transoms

17. Historic Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

Architectural Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: No

18. Is the property endangered? No

19. Bibliography.

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 11027, 7 December, 1921; as well as several other applications for alterations.

Block books and Sanborn maps

Directories.

Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.

Ormsby Donogh Real Estate File (1939–1977), BAHA.

Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.

“A Profile of the Elmwood: Trends and Counter-Trends in a Berkeley Neighborhood Commercial District” Joanna Callenbach, Geography 181 class paper, Spring 1978.

ancestry.com

Wikipedia.

“Wife’s Kisses Not Voluntary: Frederick Romie, Seeking Divorce, Tells of Spouse’s Indifference,” *Oakland Tribune*, 28 October 1913.

Pon Honor opening of store no. 12 advertisement, *Oakland Tribune*, 10 March 1922.

“Dorsch Proves Faith in City,” *Oakland Post Enquirer*, 25 March 1922.

“Mercantile Trust Co. Branch Opened,” *The Courier*, 29 April 1922.

“Grocers Prove Honesty Pays in Business,” *Oakland Post Enquirer*, 11 August 1922.

“Improved Store Building Design” by R. L. Mills, *Architect & Engineer*, March 1924.

“Dorsch on Staff of E. B. Field Co,” *Oakland Tribune*, 13 May 1924.

“Curious Path to Success by Minority S&L” by Roger Rapoport, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 28 April 1978.

“An Old Building that Introduced a New Concept” by Anthony Bruce for the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association, *Berkeley Gazette*, 11 February 1982.

20. Recorder

Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird, 2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

12 November 2025

Additional Photographs.



The Romie Building. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



The Romie Building. Anthony Bruce, 1982.



The Romie Building. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



The Romie Building. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



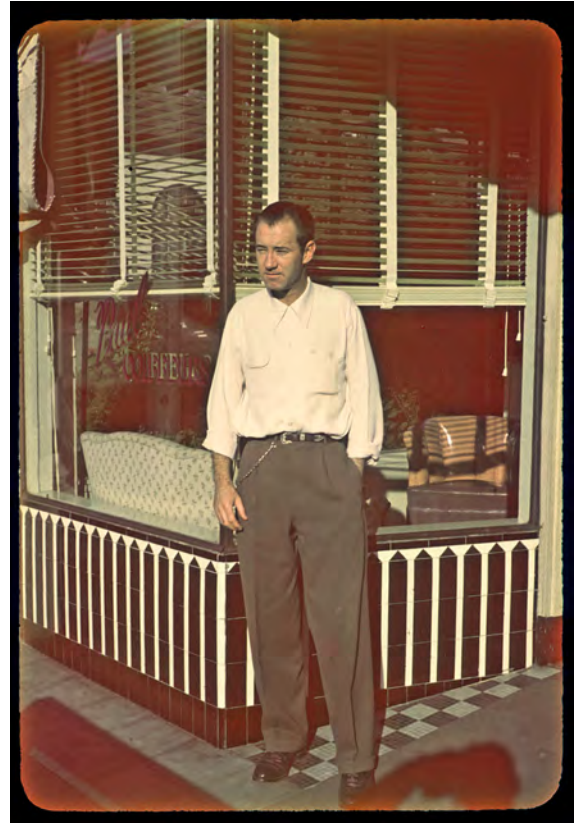
The Romie Building when new, showing extensive Gothic ornamentation. Original shops were the Quality Bakery, Pon Honor Market, and the new Elmwood Branch of the Mercantile Trust Company. From Architect & Engineer, March 1924.

Additional Photographs.



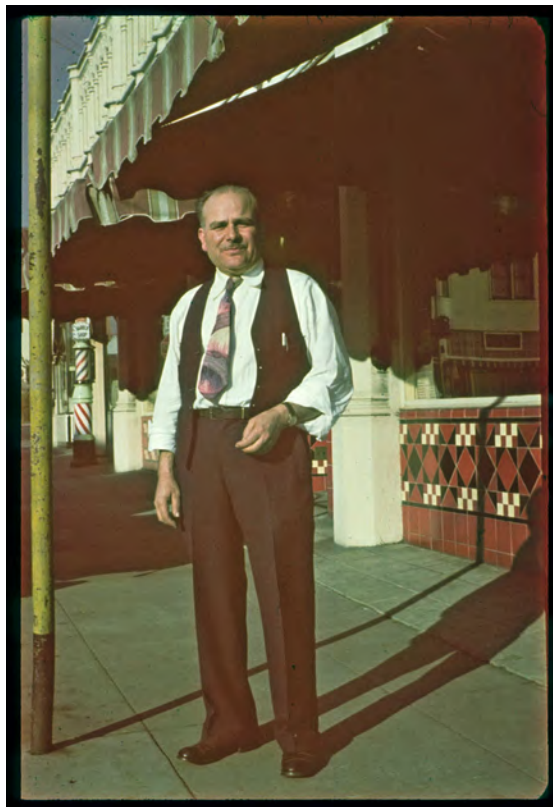
The Romie Building, showing corner shopfront in the 1940s/1950s with its “Margaret Burnham” tile bulkhead. Donogh Real Estate File, BAHA.

below: The Romie Building and Frank Gallardo of Frank N. Gallardo Upholstering Co., 2967 College, showing colorful tile likely installed by Public Food Stores. Byron Bolfig, 1947, Berkeley Historical Society..



The Romie Building. Paul Cornelius of Paul’s Coiffeurs, showing closeup of the “Burnham” tile.

Byron Bolfig, 1947, Berkeley Historical Society..



The Romie Building, showing Safeway as the tenant in the southernmost three shopfronts. Ormsby Donogh, 1939, Donogh Real Estate File, BAHA.



Additional Photographs.



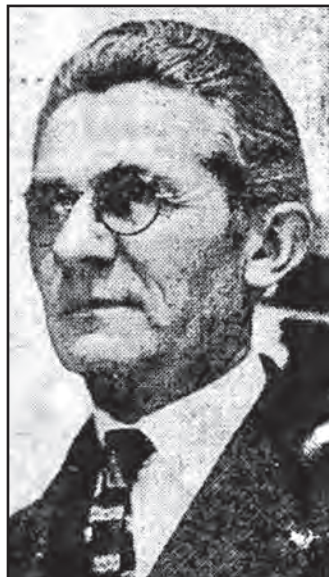
Sketch of the Mercantile Trust Company branch in the Romie Building. The Courier, 29 April 1922.



Leslie R. Wilson, contractor for the Romie Building. Found online.



C. A. McAllister, co-founder of the Pon Honor chain. Oakland Post Enquirer, 11 August 1922.



George Archambeault, co-founder of the Pon Honor chain. Oakland Post Enquirer, 11 August 1922.



Charles C. Dorsch, second owner of the Romie Building. Oakland Post Enquirer, 25 March 1922.



Leonor Godinez-Castillo, manager of City Federal Savings in the Romie Building. San Francisco Chronicle, 28 April 1978.

Additional Photographs.



Architect Ted Moulton's rendering of the proposed remodeling for City Federal Savings, June 1977. BAHA archives.

PON HONOR
WE SPLIT THE NICKEL
WE ANNOUNCE THE
**Opening of
STORE No. 12**
On College Ave. at Ashby.

Fresh Large White Eggs . . . 25c

PON HONOR BUTTER KELLOGG'S CORN 82c
It has an incomparable flavor. FLAKES
It always fresh and tasty. CREAM OF WHEAT 20c
1-lb. Carton (in 1/2s) . . . 41c QUAKER OATS 12c
2-lb. Carton (in 1/2s) . . . 81c small

SPERRY FLOUR The Kind You're Proud
Flour is going higher. COFFEE QUALITY to Serve in Sealed Cans.

5-pound sack . . . 27c
10-pound sack . . . 51c
25-pound sack . . . \$1.15
50-pound sack . . . \$2.25

Creme Oil Soap . . 7c 1 lb. . 35c
2 1/2 lbs. 85c

Lux . . . 9c
Old Dutch . . 10c
S.O.S. Cleanser . 25c
Steel Wool . . 12c
Jello . . . 9c
Tea Shaker Salt . 10c
Mazda Oil, pints . 28c
Mazda Oil, quarts . 50c

Put up 1/2 quantity
1 lb. 21c
2 lbs. 41c

Put Can 25c
Qt. Can 48c
1/2 Gal. 90c
1 Gal. \$1.65

UP-TOWN STORES

11 Grand Ave. No. 5	1314 5th St. No. 8
Back of the Broadway Bldg. No. 6	1414 Maple Hill No. 9
OAKLAND STORES	HAYWARD STORE
1001 Piedmont No. 1	1014 Main St. No. 3
1401 Geary St. No. 2	SAN LEANDRO STORE
1014 Geary St. No. 7	1114 1st St. No. 4
1114 Telegraph No. 4	BERKELEY STORE
1114 College Ave. No. 11	1114 Broadway No. 9
	1114 Broadway No. 10

STORE UNDER CONSTRUCTION
No. 12 at Telegraph and 14th Street

Margaret Burnham's
Cottage Candies
—ANNOUNCING—
THE OPENING OF COTTAGE NO. 8
AT
**Ashby-College Avenue
Berkeley**

The same strict observance of our motto:
"Quality, Freshness, Cleanliness, Reason-
able Price, Courteous Service," will be
upheld in this, our new Cottage, as in all
other cottages located at

Cottage No. 1 3800 Piedmont Ave.	Cottage No. 2 2356 Telegraph Ave.	Cottage No. 3 1303 Polk St., S. F.
Cottage No. 4 445 14th Street	Cottage No. 5 2201 Shattuck Ave.	Cottage No. 6 463 Geary St., S. F.
COTTAGE NO. 7 3249 Grand Ave.	COTTAGE NO. 8 Cor. Ashby and College Ave.	

Pon Honor and Margaret Burnham advertisements announcing the opening of their stores in the Romie Building. Oakland Tribune, 10 March 1922 and 2 February 1928.

APPLICATION FOR BUILDING PERMIT FRAME BUILDING

Application is hereby made to the Department of Buildings and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for permission to build a 1 story 5 room frame store on the S.E. corner of College and Elmwood Park being Lot No. 1 Block C

According to plans and Specifications hereinaft submitted. All provisions of the Building Law will be complied with in the erection of said building whether specified herein or not.

Estimated entire cost of Building \$ 8000.00

Building to be occupied as Store by (No.) _____ families

Size of Lot 75 ft. by 60 ft. Extreme height of building 20 ft.

Height in clear of eollar _____ ft. Height in clear of first story 16 ft. _____ in

Height in clear of second story _____ ft. Height in clear of third story _____ ft. _____ in

Foundation to be of (material) Concrete Thickness 12 inches, greatest height of foundation 36 inches.

Width of footings 12 inches

Mud sills 3 X 6 Main sills _____ X _____ Girders 6 X 12 Post

on piers 2 X 4 by 14 ft. on centers. If piers are used, give size _____

Size of underpinning _____ inches _____ inches O. C. Size of studs in first story 2 X 6 inches 16 inches O. C.

Size of studs in second story _____ inches _____ inches O. C. Size of studs in third story _____ inches _____ inches O. C.

Exterior wall covering to be of Plaster Light shaft wall covering to be of _____

All outside walls covered with singles or plaster will be close boarded.

First floor joists _____ X _____ inches _____ inches on centers. Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Second floor joists _____ X _____ inches _____ inches on centers. Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Third floor joists _____ X _____ inches _____ inches on centers. Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Ceiling joists _____ X _____ inches _____ inches on centers. Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Rafters _____ X _____ inches _____ inches on centers. Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Roof covered with Tar & gravel steep or flat? flat Pitch _____

Studs in bearing partitions will be same as outside walls of each story.

Chimneys of _____ lined with _____ any patent flues? _____

Gas grate flues to be patent chimney or brick? _____

Any dumb waiters or chutes? _____ Any elevator (freight or passenger)? _____

Cove brackets will be solid.

Name of Owner of Ground F. F. Rame Residence Address 418 Newton Ave.

Name of Owner of Building _____ Residence Address _____

Name of Lessee of Building _____ Residence Address _____

Name of Architect or Designer _____ Residence Address _____

Name of Builder Leslie P. Wilson Residence Address 2216 Blake St.

We hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

2961 College Ave. Leslie P. Wilson
Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder.

Address 2216 Blake St.

This Permit expires one year from date unless sooner revoked by the City Council.

Date Dec. 7-1921 Permit No. 11027



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 22

two small parkways and two stone pillars
adjoining 2959 & 2961 College Avenue



"Elmwood Park entrance" the north parkway, NE corner College and Ashby avenues. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Address:** NE and SE corners College and Ashby avenues
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 052-1567
(Elmwood Park Tract, Block A southern 15 feet of Lots 1 and 2 and Block C, northern 15 feet of Lots 1 and 2)
Dimensions: 15 feet x 113 feet; 15 feet x about 85 feet
Cross Streets: Russell Street and Webster Street
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: Ø
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
 - a. **Building(s):** No **Garden:** Yes **Other Feature(s):** stone pillars and remaining stone base of third pillar
 - b. **Landscape or Open Space:** Yes
 - c. **Historic Site:** No
 - d. **District:** Yes
 - e. **Other:** Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Elmwood Park entrance; Elmwood Parkways
Commonly Known Name: not known
6. **Date of Construction:** 1905-06 **Factual:** Yes
Source of Information: date of Elmwood Park subdivision map
7. **Architect:** unknown
8. **Builder:** unknown
9. **Style:** rustic
10. **Original Owners:** Breed & Bancroft, Inc. (a corporation)
Original Use: advertising and enticement (for Elmwood Park subdivision)
11. **Present Owner:** City of Berkeley
Present Occupant: Ø
12. **Present Use:** park ("planted median")
Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** C-E-
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Ø **Interior:** Ø **Grounds:** Excellent
Has the property's exterior been altered? Ø

1. Description.

The North Park.

The small, parked area south of the bank building has been owned by the City of Berkeley since at least 1927. It is maintained as a public landscaped enhancement. On either side of Ashby were the four sandstone entry pillars to the new (1905) Elmwood Park subdivision. This park contains the base of one of the two smaller secondary pillars. The pillar itself disappeared sometime after 1950. One of the large pillars survives in the sidewalk next to the park. "Elmwood Park" is carved in the stone.

Due to the re-subdivision of the original lots on the north side of Ashby, this park extends farther east than the south park, and the landscaping is somewhat different as this area receives sun all day. The landscaped area is separated from the sidewalk by a high, narrow concrete curb. The space is mostly taken up with a lush, green lawn. There is a flower bed at the east (mostly agapanthus) and a low-growing flowering plant and fortnight lilies at the west end. Low shrubs are planted along the wall of the bank, with four roof-high evergreen trees set between the bank's windows. There was at

least one more evergreen, but some have been removed). This lawn contains a caged utility access.

The South Park.

The small, parked area north of the Romie Building has been owned by the City of Berkeley since at least 1927. It is maintained as a public landscaped enhancement. This park contains one of the two smaller secondary pillars. It is set on a flat concrete base in a gravel covered section. To the east is a lawn. A curving and angled curb-like concrete edging defines the lawn and gravel area.

A line of small plants define the south edge of the park in front of the side window of the Romie Building at College Avenue. A hedge continues this line to the eastern edge of the park. There is one break in the hedge where an emergency mezzanine stairway exit impinges on the park.

A tree, growing behind the hedge, shades the eastern section of park. There are two utility access points in the lawn near the sidewalk; one is contained in a wire cage.

15. History.

That the two parklike amenities at College and Ashby exist in the Elmwood commercial district today is due to the real estate development firm of Breed & Bancroft, Inc. 1060 Broadway (Arthur H. Breed, President; Harlow P. Bancroft, Secretary) which bought the Macdonough Estate in November 1905, and to the foresight of the City of Berkeley, which preserved these two narrow strips of land as public open space.

The Elmwood Park tract, which originally comprised the two blocks on the east side of College Avenue between Russell and Webster, and eastward to just beyond Piedmont Avenue, was laid out by Town Engineer Wilbur F. Mc-

Clure in 1905; the Town Trustees approved the streets on December 11, 1905; and the subdivision map for Elmwood Park was filed with the county the same day. An advertising brochure states, "Elmwood Park, comprising the property formerly owned by the Macdonough Estate. The cream of Berkeley residence property, now placed on the market by the owners Breed & Bancroft." It was noted that a branch real estate office was on the property. The owners of Elmwood Park placed a deed restriction on sold lots that prohibited saloons, but they did not prohibit commercial buildings in this supposed residential subdivision. Thus, the way was paved for the Elmwood commercial district, at

least on the east side of College Avenue.

As is often the case with subdivisions, especially if they are in the middle of open land, as was Elmwood Park, in order to give the tract visibility and to make it more enticing to prospective buyers, a monumental entrance was erected. Sandstone pillars were constructed on either side of Ashby (then Elmwood Avenue). They consisted of two large pillars with the name of the subdivision carved into the stone and two smaller auxiliary pillars, placed so as to form an arc,

At some point, as was customary, the developers would have deeded the narrow strips of land with the pillars to the City, however, in this case it seems not to have happened. In 1922 the City attempted to zone a fifteen-foot width along Ashby as park zones. Property owners on the north sued the City and won. The land on the north changed hands the next year, the bank building was completed in 1926, and in 1927 the City at last acquired the land, both on the north and south sides of Ashby. Fred Romie must have accepted the park zoning on the north fifteen feet of his property, as his building, begun in 1921, preserved that width as open space.

It is not known when the City first thought of these two strips as possible parks. Even before the City owned these two parks, the 1924–25

Annual Report mentions that the “Elmwood Court parkways,” along with other listed parks and parkways, had “all received their usual care and maintenance.” Over the years, the City has continued to maintain the land as parked areas for the enjoyment of all.

Today, two intact pillars remain. The southernmost of the two large ones is missing and only the base remains of the northernmost small pillar (still there in a 1950 photo). By the end of the 20th Century, the two remaining pillars were in sad shape, especially the southernmost. Mortar was missing, stones had fallen away, the stone sphere on top was broken, and graffiti had been sprayed on the pillar. In 1996, with a suggestion by Councilmember Polly Armstrong to neighbor Doris Nassiry, a group was formed—Pillars of Our Community—to restore the pillars. The group received a \$3,500 grant from the City and raised the remaining funds from neighbors and merchants. The south pillar was disassembled, a secure foundation created, and finally put back together under the guidance of stonemason Ben Epperly. The north pillar also received some care during the process. When all was finished, a public dedication occurred on December 10, 2002 where Doris Nassiry’s dedication and perseverance was acknowledged.

16. Significance.

The Elmwood Parkways and pillars are significant as a bit of landscaped open space in the center of a bustling two-block commercial district. The parkways add greenery and serenity to this very urban center, as do the ginkgo trees that were much later planted along the two blocks of College Avenue. Each has received a different landscape treatment based on their location, the type of building adjoining the space, and the different lengths of the two parkways.

The Elmwood Pillars are significant as a tangible piece of history, hearkening back to the time

when the district was open land and monumental pillars were needed to help define the area of a new subdivision. Made of light-colored sandstone, the pillars are of architectural interest in the rusticity of the stone that was chosen. The chiseled spheres, and the incised lettering on the larger pillar, add to their monumental appearance and the association with past times. Different in style and materials from other subdivision markers found throughout Berkeley, they resemble most closely the pillars of Fairview Park, just over the line in Oakland.

Features to Preserve.

- the two sandstone columns and the base of the third
- the curbing surrounding the north parkway
- the lawns

17. Historic Value— Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

Architectural Value— Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

18. Is the property endangered? No

19. Bibliography.

Block books and Sanborn maps

Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.

Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.

Annual Report for 1924–1925, City of Berkeley.

Elmwood Park advertising brochure, Breed & Bancroft, Inc., 1905

Advertisement for Elm Terrace, Mason-McDuffie Co., *Berkeley Gazette*, 21 November 1905.

Advertisement for Elm Terrace, Mason-McDuffie Co., *Berkeley Gazette*, 23 November 1905.

“Big Realty Transfer Recorded,” *Oakland Enquirer*, 7 December 1905.

“Trustees Do Much Business,” *Berkeley Gazette*, 12 December 1905.

Advertisement for Elmwood Park, E. L. Coryell Co., *Berkeley Gazette*, 13 December 1905.

Advertisement for Elmwood Park, Breed & Bancroft, *Berkeley Gazette*, 12 June 1906.

“Elmwood Park Map,” *Berkeley Gazette*, 9 October 1906.

“Doctor Wins Suit to Prevent Zoning,” *Oakland Tribune*, 22 September 1922.

Elmwood Park, tour guide, Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association, 2015.

20. Recorder

Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird,
2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

15 November 2025

Additional Photographs.



The north park, College & Ashby. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



The north parkway, looking west toward College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Base of the missing small pillar. Anthony Bruce, 2014.



The north parkway, viewed from College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



The large pillar, with the parkway behind. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

Additional Photographs.

The north parkway in about 1952, showing both pillars still in place. Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association.



The two parkways in relation to the College and Ashby intersection, looking east. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



The newly built pillars at the entrance to the Breed & Bancroft development, Elmwood Park. This view is of the future site of the north parkway.

*Louis L. Stein Collection,
Berkeley Historical Society.*

Additional Photographs.



"Elmwood Park entrance," south parkway, SE College and Ashby Avenues. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

Additional Photographs.



The south parkway at Ashby and College, looking west. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



The south parkway at Ashby and College, looking southeast from the corner. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



The south parkway at Ashby and College, showing the smaller of the two stone pillars (and the only one remaining of the two). Looking northwest. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

Additional Photographs.



The south pillar before restoration was begun.



above and below:
North
and south
pillars
undergoing
restoration.



Newspaper advertisement for Elmwood Park, then called Elm Terrace. Berkeley Gazette, 23 November 1905.



Doris Nassiry flanked by stonemasons at the dedication ceremony. Virginia Abascal, 10 December 2002.



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 23

Mercantile Trust Company Bank Building
2959 College Avenue

City of Berkeley Landmark No. 55



The Mercantile Trust Company Bank Building, 2959 College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2020.

1. **Street Address:** 2959 College Avenue
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 052-1567-01700
(Elmwood Park Tract, Block A, Lot: southern portion of Lots 1 & 2)
Dimensions: 70 feet x 115 feet
Cross Streets: Ashby Avenue and Russell Street
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** Yes, 1977
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 11870
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
 - a. **Building(s):** Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
 - b. **Landscape or Open Space:** No
 - c. **Historic Site:** No
 - d. **District:** Yes
 - e. **Other:** Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Mercantile Trust Company Building; American Trust Company Building
Commonly Known Name: Wells Fargo
6. **Date of Construction:** 1925 **Factual:** Yes
Source of Information: City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 21017, 8 June 1925
7. **Architect:** Walter H. Ratcliff, Jr., First National Bank Building, Berkeley
8. **Builder:** Carroll Reginald Collupy, 464 California Street, San Francisco
9. **Style:** California Mission
10. **Original Owners:** Mercantile Trust Company of California, 464 California Street, San Francisco
Original Use: commercial (bank)
11. **Present Owner:** ATC Building Company
Present Occupant: Wells Fargo Bank
12. **Present Use:** commercial (bank)
Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** R-
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Excellent **Interior:** good **Grounds:** Ø
Has the property's exterior been altered? Yes

14. Description.

Built in 1925, this is a rectangular one-and-one-half story reinforced concrete bank building. It was surfaced in Alhambra Mission Stucco by plastering contractor Arthur Sayer, who gave it a finish akin to the handwork seen on the missions. The entrance on the narrower College Avenue façade is in the center of three tall arches which spring from two columns of polished red Missouri granite with elaborate Corinthian capitals. The two flanking arches contain the last two of eight original exquisitely mullioned windows, and these have been compromised by the insertion of automatic teller machines. The center arch is taller following the peak of the red tile roof. The bank's name is lettered in the gable end with red plastic letters.

The Ashby Avenue side is 107 feet long, and set back about fifteen feet from the sidewalk. There are six tall arched windows on this side, the same height as the two in front. There is one arched window (slightly smaller) centered on the rear wall. The bank's windows were possibly the most beautiful in Berkeley, but tragically they were replaced with bronzed anodized aluminum because operable windows were desired. The tragedy is, a number of years later,

air conditioning was thought to be better. So the windows were no longer opened and large ductwork was run through the banking hall, hiding some of the ceiling beams and necessitating the removal of one of three large Ansel Adams photographs.

The arches, the tile roof, and the open, "hand-crafted" ceiling make the building reminiscent of California missions, both inside and out. This is a building of utmost simplicity and integrity of design proportions.

The open, skylight-lit interior features a ceiling of open trusswork. The beams, as well as the entire dark wood ceiling, are stencilled with designs that appear to be stylized California poppies. A mezzanine at the back has a turned wood railing. The polished tile floor has been resurfaced, chandeliers long ago replaced with fluorescent lights, and the original white polished marble and gilt teller cages were replaced with pseudo-Victorian dark wood teller cages in 1979.

There is an adobe-like chimney rising from the roof near the rear of the building.

15. History.

The Mercantile Trust Company (merged with the American Bank into the American Trust Company the following year) built this branch bank in 1925. It had been operating in the neighborhood since 1923 under the management of T. M. Robinson, Jr., The branch bank was a typical development of the prosperous 1920s, as commercial attention began to shift from older downtown centers to neighborhood "strips" along transit routes. A bank building historically gave the area an architectural focus and stimulated commercial growth around it. This bank remains the finest building in the Elmwood shopping district, Berkeley's best preserved neighborhood business district. It was

sited significantly next to the fine stone gate posts of the Elmwood residential district and next to an existing landscaped plot.

The *Berkeley Daily Gazette* described the building on opening day, December 19, 1925. Here are some excerpts: "Striking in its combination of the utilitarian and the aesthetic, the spacious banking room evoked many expressions of admiration from the visitors. Modified Spanish might be taken as the term best fitting to describe the building. Adorning the rear wall are two mounted buffalo heads, while another one, said to be the largest in the country, looks out from above the front wall, high above the entrance. On the north side wall is an elk head

and a caribou head. These would all seem to be an entirely new decorative feature for a banking-room. The stencil painted ceiling with carved wooden beams are also a departure from the old customs in bank architecture.

“The floor of the lobby is of Italian tile of brick-like texture fitting in well with the general Spanish motif. The entire work [teller cages] separating the lobby and the working space is of light Tennessee marble [this work was removed in 1979].”

One hundred years of unchanged ownership and use are reflected in the excellent physical condition of the building. It is a fine example of the work of Walter Ratcliff, leader of Berkeley’s building boom in the 1920s, outstanding exponent of the Spanish Colonial style, City Architect from 1913, and founder of a three-generation architectural firm in Berkeley.

Much of the history and description were taken from the 1982 landmark application written by Betty Marvin and Brian Horrigan.

16. Significance.

The Mercantile Trust Company Bank Building remains the finest building in the Elmwood shopping district, which is Berkeley’s best preserved neighborhood shopping district. The bank is also one of the finest examples of Walter Ratcliff’s work in Berkeley.

Walter Ratcliff was an important and prolific architect in Berkeley. He designed attractive, livable residences throughout his long career (1906–1949). As City Architect, beginning in 1913, he designed schools, fire stations, and other City buildings. He also designed some of the most significant commercial buildings in

Berkeley. Not only did he design the Elmwood branch of the Mercantile Trust Company, but also the bank’s main office within his Chamber of Commerce Building at Shattuck and Center.

The bank was built in the Elmwood District during the second wave of development, becoming a second anchor for the business district, after the Strand Theater, when construction resumed after World War I. The bank remains today as an important visual and commercial anchor and as a component of the small town “Main Street” atmosphere of the Elmwood Commercial District.

Features to Preserve.

- the façade with its “jazz” plastering and ten arched windows
- the tile roof
- the polished red Missouri granite columns and their Corinthian capitals
- the entrance and the carved lintel
- the remaining turned mullions in the front arched windows
- the small windows with their iron grilles.

17. Historic Value—	City: Yes	Neighborhood: Yes
Architectural Value—	City: Yes	Neighborhood: Yes

18. Is the property endangered? No

19. Bibliography.

Building Permit Application #21017, 20 June 1927; as well as several alteration applications.

State Historic Resources Inventory, 1977 by Brian Horrigan.

City of Berkeley Landmark Application, Betty Marvin and Brian Horrigan, 8 January 1982.

Block books and Sanborn maps.

Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.

Ormsby Donogh Real Estate File (1939–1977), BAHA.

Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.

“Mercantile Bank Opens Handsome Elmwood Branch,” *Berkeley Daily Gazette*, 19 December 1925.

Architect & Engineer, April 1927, page 30.

“Elmwood: Flavor of 1920s Remains” by Brian Horrigan, *Berkeley Gazette*, May 25, 1977.

“It’s Now Elmwood Landmark” by Heidi Seney, *The Press*, 26 May 1982.

20. Recorder

Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird,
2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705
September 2025

Additional Photographs.



Mercantile Trust Company. Anthony Bruce, 2021.



Mercantile Trust Company. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Mercantile Trust Company. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Mercantile Trust Company, side view from Ashby Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Mercantile Trust Company. in its setting on College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

Additional Photographs.

Mercantile Trust Company. Ormsby Donogh, 1939, Donogh Real Estate File, BAHA.



Mercantile Trust Company. Anthony Bruce, c. 2023.



Mercantile Trust Company, showing both College Avenue and Ashby Avenue frontages. Anthony Bruce, 1982.

Additional Photographs.



*Mercantile Trust Company, rear of building showing chimney and solitary arched window.
Anthony Bruce, 2025.*



*Mercantile Trust Company, detail of granite column base.
Anthony Bruce, 2025.*



*Mercantile Trust Company, showing Corinthian capital, the carved lintel, and a bit of the turned and carved original mullions.
Anthony Bruce, 2025.*

Additional Photographs.



Mercantile Trust Company Building, Detail showing the ornate lintel over the entrance. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Mercantile Trust Company Building, Detail showing an iron grille over a small window on the south side of the building. Anthony Bruce, 2020..



*Mercantile Trust Company Building, College Avenue façade.
Byron Bolfig, November 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.*

Additional Photographs.



Two similar photos of the bank building, but taken a few years apart. This is the earlier view. The shrubs in the park are newly planted, and the name at the bottom of the blade sign is Mercantile Trust Company. Lettering incised into the stucco within the gable read, "Elmwood Branch, Mercantile Trust Company of California." Architect & Engineer, April 1927..



This picture was taken a few years later when the bank was American Trust Company. The shrubs have grown, and the name at the bottom of the blade sign has already been scraped off. The lettering incised into the stucco was not plastered over until 1936. Ratcliff Architect Archives.

Application for Building Permit.

CLASS A-B AND C BUILDING

Application is hereby made to the Department of Buildings and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for permission to
Build a one story, one room class C building.

on the corner of College Ave and Ashby Ave
Being Lot No. 4+2 Block A Elmwood Park Tract.

According to plans and Specifications herewith submitted. All provisions of the Building Law will be complied with in the
erection of said building whether specified herein or not.

Estimated entire cost of building \$ 30,000 Extrem height of building 33 ft.

Size of lot 45 by 115 feet. Size of proposed building 45 ft. by 105 ft.

Building to be occupied as ELMWOOD BRANCH BANK by Mercantile Trust
Company of California

	WALLS			PIERS OR COLUMNS		JOINTS			GIRDERS		
	HEIGHT	MATERIAL	THICKNESS SIDE FRONT	MATERIAL	SIZE	MATERIAL	SIZE	LONGEST SPAN	MATERIAL	SIZE	LONGEST SPAN
Footings		Reinforced		Reinforced							
Foundations		Concrete		Concrete							
Basement		do		do							
1st story	24'	Reinforced	8"								
2nd story	12'	do	do			O.P.	2x10	12'	O.P.	8x14	18'
3rd story											
4th story											
5th story											
6th story											
7th story											
8th story											

Light shaft wall covering to be of

Roof covered with breathing-felt roofing & Terra Cotta Spanish Tile.

Chimneys of Concrete lined with Terra Cotta any patent flue?

Gas grate flues to be patent chimney or brick?

Any dumb waiters or chutes? Any elevator (freight or passenger)?

Cove brackets will be solid.

Name of Owner of Ground Mercantile Trust Company of California

Name of Owner of Building same Res. Address 464 California St. S.F.

Name of Lessee of Building Res. Address

Name of Architect or Designer W.H. Ratcliff Bus. Address First Natl. Bk Bldg Berkeley

Name of Builder C.R. Colquhoun Bus. Address 464 Calif. St. S.F.

I hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

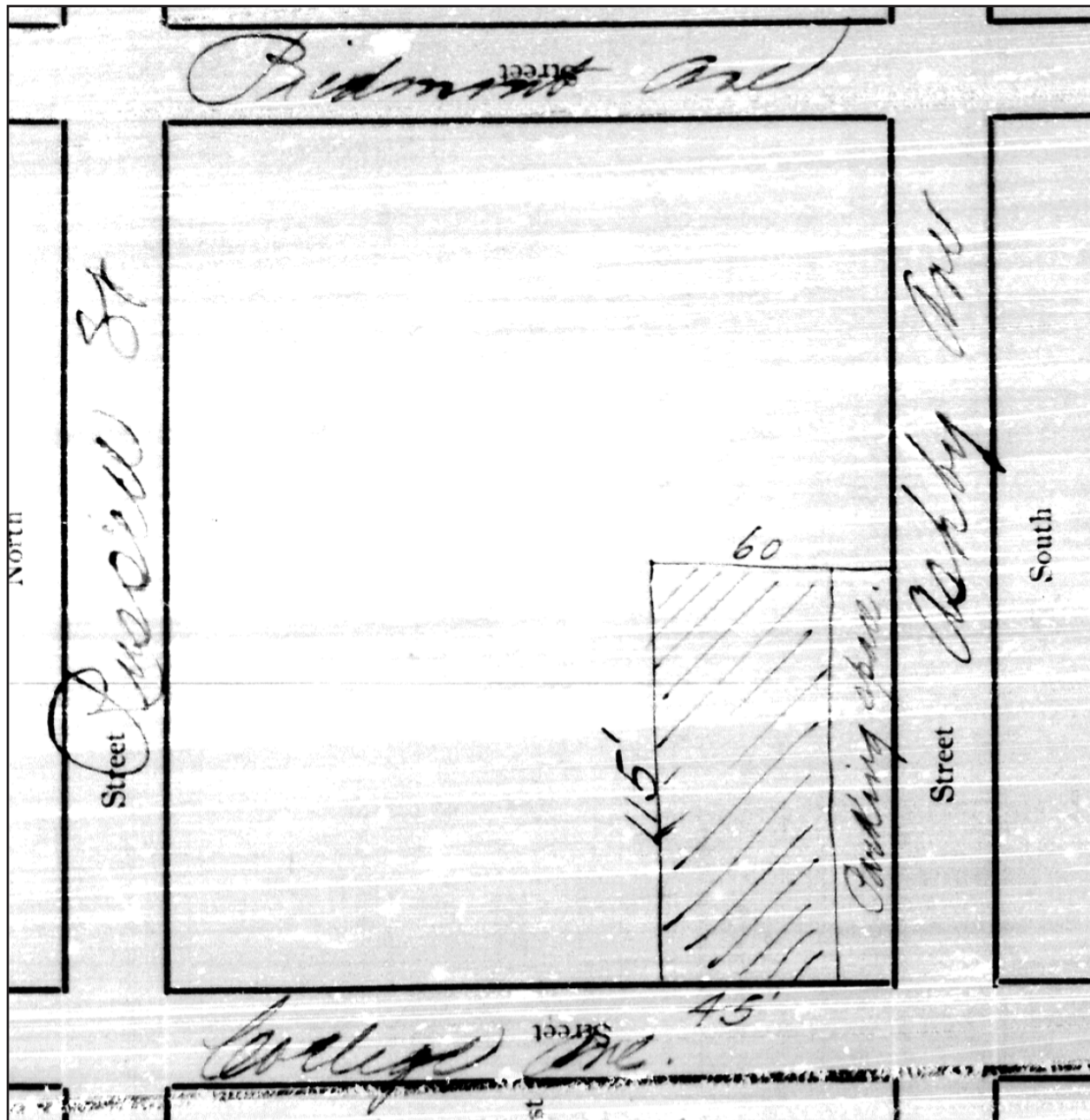
2159-180
Mercantile Trust Company of California
Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder.
Address By A.H. Monahan
464 California St. S.F.

This Permit expires one year from date unless sooner revoked by the City Council.

Date JUN - 5 - 1925

Permit No. 21017

Backroom Print West Berkeley



Plot Plan, showing parked area, from City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit
No. 21017, 8 June 1925



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 24

Wells Fargo Bank Parking Lot
2959 College Avenue (2711 Ashby Avenue)



Wells Fargo Bank parking lot, Ashby Avenue at Ashby Place. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Address:** 2959 College Avenue (formerly 2711 Ashby Avenue)
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 052-1567-01600
(Elmwood Park Tract, Block A, Lot 3)
Dimensions: approx. 35 feet x 100 feet
Cross Streets: Ashby Place and College Avenue
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 11868
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
 - a. **Building(s):** No **Garden:** Yes **Other Feature(s):** No
 - b. **Landscape or Open Space:** Yes
 - c. **Historic Site:** No
 - d. **District:** Yes
 - e. **Other:** Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Wells Fargo Bank Parking Lot
Commonly Known Name: Wells Fargo Bank Parking Lot
6. **Date of Construction:** 1964-65 **Factual:** Yes
Source of Information: dated photographs
7. **Architect:** unknown
8. **Builder:** unknown
9. **Style:** Parking Lot
10. **Original Owners:** Wells Fargo Bank
Original Use: private customer parking lot
11. **Present Owner:** ATC Building Company
Present Occupant: Wells Fargo Bank
12. **Present Use:** private customer parking lot

Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** R-2A
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Ø **Interior:** Ø **Grounds:** Excellent
Has the property's exterior been altered? Minimally

14. Description.

Opened in 1965, the Wells Fargo Bank parking lot includes ten private parking spots for bank customers. An ivy-covered fence surrounds the lot, except where there is automobile ingress and egress. The driveway on Ashby Place is the entrance. The driveway opening onto Ashby, just behind the bank, is the exit. Both entrance and exit also serve the merchants whose businesses back onto the alley that runs behind the buildings on this side of College.

15. History.

The Wells Fargo Bank determined that a dedicated parking lot for bank customers would be a worthwhile addition to the bank. On July 1, 1964 the bank purchased the lot behind the bank at 2711 Ashby Avenue. In order to create a parking lot, the three-story, brown-shingle Sarah Reamer House needed to be demolished. Mrs. Reamer, a wealthy Oakland pioneer and one of the most prominent clubwomen in California, commissioned San Francisco architect Moses J. Lyon to design her house in 1908. She died in 1910 and it was converted to six apartments for a new owner by architect Clara Burnett in 1915.

In the design of the new lot, thought went into shielding the parked cars from passersby. A redwood-slat fence surrounded the lot, except where there was automobile ingress or egress, and landscaping was designed to catch the eye. The focal point was to be an Italian stone pine, planted in 1965 as a seedling. It eventually grew so big that it was cut down a few years ago. Two tall trellises were designed for the back wall of the bank upon which vines were trained. The trellises have been removed. The remaining landscaping still creates a parklike

16. Significance.

The significance of the Wells Fargo Bank parking lot is its landscaping. The redwood fence and shrubbery hide the parked cars from the street. The general impression of the landscap-

There is lush landscaping fronting the lot along Ashby. Included is a lawn, tortured junipers, and a hedge rounding the corner to Ashby Place. This area is the same width as the park next to the bank and appears as an extension of it, but this section is privately owned.

Since the opening of the parking lot, a ramp has been installed that wends its way through the landscaping, from Ashby to the parking lot.

effect along Ashby and seems to blend with the City park along the side of the bank.

After the parking lot opened in February 1965, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph J. Gleason wrote a letter to the *Berkeley Gazette*. Ralph Gleason was the *San Francisco Chronicle's* jazz critic; they lived nearby at 2835 Ashby. They wrote:

"In this bleak era of pre-stressed concrete monstrosities and flimsy cracker-boxes, we feel any sincere aesthetic attempt should be encouraged and any successful one should be applauded. We would like to commend the Wells Fargo Bank for making their new parking lot at the Elmwood Branch into an area of which the neighborhood can be proud. The trees, shrubs, and grass (brought in in rolls and laid down like a carpet) are lovely and take up space that might have been paved over and used for parking—incredible! The redwood fence might have been link-chain metal. Someone with a sense of responsibility for good design must have been consulted. How encouraging!"

With the enormous increase in traffic in the past sixty years, the Wells Fargo parking lot is even more of a convenience for bank customers today.

ing is that it is a continuation of the City park next to the bank. It helps to create a lush entrance to the Elmwood commercial district for anyone traveling from the east.

Features to Preserve.

- the lawn
- the amount of landscaped area

17. Historic Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: No

Architectural Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: No

18. Is the property endangered? No

19. Bibliography.

Block books and Sanborn maps

Directories.

Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.

Ormsby Donogh Real Estate File (1939–1977), BAHA.

Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.

“A Profile of the Elmwood: Trends and Counter-Trends in a Berkeley Neighborhood Commercial District” Joanna Callenbach, Geography 181 class paper, Spring 1978.

ancestry.com

Wikipedia.

Photo and caption regarding new parking lot,” *Berkeley Gazette*, 26 February 1965.

Letters to the editor, *Berkeley Gazette*, 26 February 1965.

20. Recorder

Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird,
2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

13 November 2025

Additional Photographs.

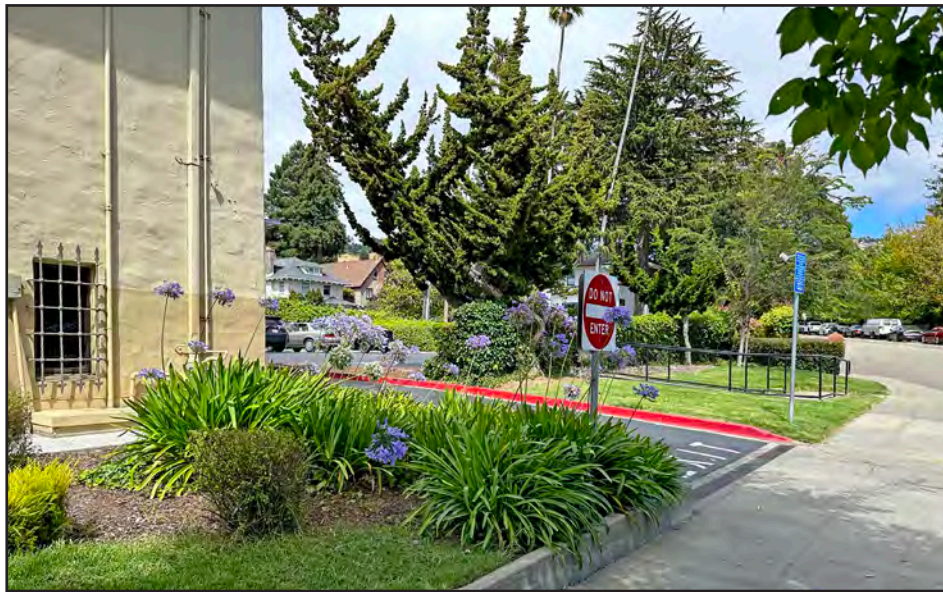
Parking lot at right and landscaping at left. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Parking lot entrance on Ashby Place. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Landscaping on Ashby Avenue with the addition of a wheelchair ramp to the parking lot. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Exit from parking lot onto Ashby Avenue. North park in foreground; parking lot landscaping beyond the driveway. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

Additional Photographs.



New parking lot and new landscaping, taken in June 1965. Two vertical wooden screens were attached to rear wall of the bank at that time. Photo: BAHA Archives.



Another view of the parking lot and landscaping. from June 1965 Oregon grape was planted along the fence and on the edge of the lawn on Ashby Place side. The Italian stone pine in the lawn grew large and was removed a few years ago, Photo: BAHA Archives.

The Mrs. Sarah E. Reamer House (Moses J. Lyon, 1908), 2711 Ashby Avenue.

Ormsby Donogh, 1939, Donogh Real Estate File, BAHA.

Additional Photographs.



Grand opening of the Wells Fargo Bank Parking Lot in February 1965, with Jim Pappas, owner of the Star Grocery, poised to be the first customer with one of the red-orange Star delivery trucks. Left to right: John Pillsbury, manager of the bank, Byron Bolfig, owner of Elmwood Hardware, Gerald Farrell, president of the Elmwood Merchants Association, and Harry Pennell, vice-president and district manager for Wells Fargo Bank.

John Pillsbury Collection.



The version of the above photo that was published in the Berkeley Gazette on February 26, 1965.



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 25
Stover Building
2947 College Avenue

City of Berkeley Landmark No. 288



The Stover Building, 2947 College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Address:** 2947, 2949, 2951, 2953 College Avenue
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 052-1567-01800
(Elmwood Park Tract, Block A, Lot: northern portion of Lots 1 & 2)
Dimensions: 70 feet x 115 feet
Cross Streets: Ashby Avenue and Russell Street
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 11870
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
 - a. **Building(s):** Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
 - b. **Landscape or Open Space:** No
 - c. **Historic Site:** No
 - d. **District:** Yes
 - e. **Other:** Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Stover Building; Bolfings
Commonly Known Name: unknown
6. **Date of Construction:** 1923 **Factual:** Yes

Source of Information: City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 14598, 30 July 1923
7. **Architect:** William H. Weeks, 369 Pine Street, San Francisco
8. **Builder:** E. L. Younger, 328 Porter Building, Woodland
9. **Style:** Adamesque Storefront
10. **Original Owners:** Mrs. Annie E. Stover, San Luis Obispo
Original Use: commercial (4 stores)
11. **Present Owner:** BEH Building LLC
Present Occupant: Elmwood Stationery (2947 College); Wine Shop (1949 College); Martial Arts (2951 College); Brows by the Bay (2953 College)
12. **Present Use:** commercial (4 stores)
Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** C-E
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Excellent **Interior:** unknown **Grounds:** Ø
Has the property's exterior been altered? Yes

14. Description.

Built in 1923, this is a one-story reinforced concrete structure with a cement plaster exterior painted cream and tan with olive green transom frames. Piers at each end of the building are in the form of pilasters with capitals. The pilasters are decorated with Robert Adams Georgian style *bas relief* ornamentation: urns, festoons, cornucopia, and leaves and flowers. A frieze runs the length of the building above the transoms. The frieze consists of plain horizontal panels separated by small vertical panels of Robert Adams decoration. The cornice originally was topped with terra cotta or cast-concrete Classical cresting, which may have been removed in the c. 1960 modernization of the façade.

The building originally contained three full shops and one shallow storefront at the south end. In about 1960, the hardware store (which had been there since the beginning) expanded into two shop spaces and the new double shop-

front featured an aluminum-framed display window at an angle and a recessed entry with aluminum door. The full length of transoms was covered with horizontal redwood slats, and the bulkheads were resurfaced with mosaic tile. The only intact shopfront to remain was the southernmost, and it survives to this day with original mottled green-and-brown bulkhead tile, mosaic tile and marble entry paving, copper Kawneer window frames, and the finished-wood door with vertical center window panel and original hardware.

After the hardware store closed in 2007, the three main storefronts were rebuilt to match each other and to appear more as they would in 1923. They now have recessed entries with double doors of wood with vertical window panels. A close match to the original bulkhead tile was installed and the Adam decoration on the end pilasters was uncovered by relocating utilities that had hidden them for several years.

15. History.

Although the building permit for the Stover Building gives Mrs. Stover's address as San Luis Obispo, she was living in Berkeley when she purchased all of Lot 1, Block A of the Elmwood Park Tract. Dr. William Miller Stover and his wife, the former Anna E. Mitchell, *did* live in San Luis Obispo, where Dr. Mitchell ran the Stover Sanitarium, was mayor, and was president of the Chamber of Commerce. However, when their two children, Ethel Virginia and Raymen Beverly, were ready for college, the family moved into a brand-new house (built 1919) at 2703 Stuart Street, corner of College Avenue, so they could attend the University.

It is quite likely that Mrs. Stover saw the investment potential in the business district as building began again after the war. She was not a novice in building and she knew Berkeley. In 1912 she hired designer John Sullivan to design

a house at 2642 Dana Street for her sister and brother-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Samuel J. Kitzmiller. (Also in 1912 John Sullivan designed an Elmwood business block at 2901 College.)

In March 1923, there was a lot line readjustment between Lots 1 and 2, with the Mercantile Trust Company purchasing the southern half of the two lots and Mrs. Stover receiving the northern two lots. Mrs. Stover began construction of her shop building in July of that same year.

California architect William Weeks designed only five other buildings in Berkeley. Why did Mrs. Stover choose Weeks for her new building? Annie Mitchell Stover was born in Watsonville and family members continued to live there. William Weeks is most closely associated with Watsonville, as his successful career began there. Perhaps she chose him out of loy-

ality to her hometown. Coincidentally, while the Stovers were living on Stuart, a new house was under construction next door at 2751 College, and it was designed by none other than William Weeks. Perhaps they met him at the job site. But the most likely reason that Weeks was chosen for the Stover project is that Weeks had already worked for the Stover family: in 1911 he had designed Dr. Stover's sanitarium in San Luis Obispo.

In 1924, Annie Stover's husband died. Their daughter had married in 1920, but mother and son remained in Berkeley, moving into one of the new John Hudson Thomas-designed cottages nearby at 2 Claremont Crescent. Mrs. Stover's daughter and grandson later joined them there. Mrs. Stover lived in the house until her death in 1936.

When the completed building opened in 1924, a first tenant was Elmwood Household Hardware Co. at 2951 College run by Walter A. Gompertz. The store had previously been at 2905 College in the Dondero Building. In 1932, Gompertz sold the business to Charles Bolfig of Fresno. He had been manager of a hardware store in Porterville and later in Fresno before learning of the opportunity to own his own store in Berkeley. The Bolfig family arrived in Berkeley in March 1932. With son Byron, they moved into another of the John Hudson Thomas-designed Claremont Crescent cottages. Sometime before he died in 1937, Charles Bolfig acquired the Stover Building. Byron immediately took over the running of the business, and in 1945 hired Bob Gilmore.

When Ye Olde Cradle Shoppe (clothes and toys for small children) at 2949 College closed in the late 1950s, Bolfigs was able to expand into

that space, doubling the size of the store. This is when the modernization of the shopfronts occurred. Bob Gilmore and his wife Jeanette bought the hardware store (and later the building) in the early 1970s. Tad Laird had worked in the store during high school. In the 1990s, Tad and his wife returned to the neighborhood and he opened a locksmith business in the former jewelers at 2953. In 2002 the Lairds bought the hardware business, as well as the building, from Bob Gilmore. The hardware store, having been owned by four families, finally closed about 2007, making it one of the longest running businesses in the Elmwood, having first opened at least by 1922 if not a bit earlier.

The small, shallow shop space at 2953 College—the storefront that has evaded any remodeling over the years—began life as a jeweler or watch repair shop in 1924 run by Ernest Clare. The space seems to have had a long succession of jewelers until the mid-1940s when the Hunter Jewelry Company, proprietor Perry Hunter, moved in. This business occupied the space for many decades (at least into the 1990s when the locksmith business moved in). It later was a shop specializing in toy robots and is now an eyebrow salon.

The space at 2947 College has housed various stationery shops since at least 1940 when Angie Fisher Gilbert purchased The Joy Shop, at 2983 College since 1931, and reopened it at this location. The Joy Shop was more of a toy shop, but it also sold stationery. Mrs. Gilbert remodeled her space in 1954, but in 1956 The Joy Shop closed. The Elmwood Stationers took over the space and has remained through several owners.

16. Significance.

The Stover Building is an important example of small-scale store building design by a significant California architect, William H. Weeks (1864–1936). As quoted in Betty Lewis' book,

W. H. Weeks, Architect, from an obituary, "Weeks was a genuinely great architect, and all over California cities there are monuments to his skill." Although probably best known for his

innovative school buildings, he also designed hotels, commercial buildings, public libraries, and residences. Weeks designed a total of five buildings in Berkeley in addition to the Stover Building: the Foss House (1896), the Campbell Flats (1922), the Bishop Berkeley Apartments (1928), and the Durant Hotel (1928). Weeks succeeded in giving the small Stover Building a classical dignity and presence. He did so through careful proportioning of its major elements and appropriate use of ornament.

The Stover Building is a strategically located and vital element of the special townscape of Berkeley's unique and historic Elmwood commercial district. The district's special charm owes much to its clearly bounded compact size and to its pedestrian-friendly sidewalks with many interesting façades along them. Particularly with its location in the heart of the district, the Stover Building contributes exceptionally to the continuity and interest of the streetscape. The impressive sweep of its entablature helps to explain this. So does its intricate *bas-relief*

Adamsesque ornamentation that does much to enliven the façade.

The Stover Building has significance for its association with the development of Berkeley as a city offering strong communities with locally owned, neighborhood-oriented businesses. The Elmwood commercial district in general has fit that pattern quite well. With its healthy range of locally oriented establishments and its loyal customers, the district seems rather like the friendly downtown of some freestanding city. The Stover Building has importantly contributed to this. Through many decades and right down to the present, it has offered to local residents a convenient mix of retail shops.

The Stover Building was erected in 1923, during a strong surge of post-war construction when the Elmwood commercial district achieved its present basic form. It tangibly and importantly recalls that dramatic period.

The Significance and some of the History were taken from the 2006 landmark application written by John S. English.

Features to Preserve.

- the façade with its Adamsesque ornamentation
- the transom windows
- the entire shopfront at 2953 College: tile and marble entrance paving, tile bulkhead, door, copper window frames

17. Historic Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

Architectural Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

18. Is the property endangered? No

19. Bibliography.

Building Permit Application #14598, 30 July 1923; as well as several alteration applications.

City of Berkeley Landmark Application, John S. English, 4 July 2006.

Block books and Sanborn maps

Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.

Ormsby Donogh Real Estate File (1939–1977), BAHA.

Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.

ancestry.com

“The Circuitous Career of Berkeley’s Favorite Undertaker,” Daniella Thompson, 27 June 2016. BAHA website.

20. Recorder

Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird, 2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

31 August 2025

Additional Photographs.



Stover Building, showing the surviving original shop-front at 2953 College. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Stover Building, showing the Adamesque decoration at the south edge of the façade. as well as the original bulkhead tile at 2953 College. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Perry Hunter standing in the same spot as the previous photo in front of Hunter Jewelry at 2953 College. Byron Bolfing, 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.

Additional Photographs.



Stover Building, showing the redwood slats that hid the transoms for many years. Anthony Bruce, 1982.



Stover Building. Ormsby Donogh, 1939, Donogh Real Estate File, BAHA.

Additional Photographs.



Mr. and Mrs. Perry Hunter inside the Hunter Jewelry Company, 2953 College Avenue, in the Stover Building. Byron Bolfig, 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.



Mrs. Angie Fisher Gilbert, who ran The Joy Shop at 2747 College in the Stover Building since about 1940, selling toys and novelties as well as stationery. Byron Bolfig, 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.



below: The Stover Building in 1950, showing the original cresting. [Byron Bolfig?] Berkeley Historical Society.



Additional Photographs.



The Stover Building, showing a very old hardware sign painted on the transom. Discovered during restoration about 2008. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Mrs. Annie E. Mitchell Stover, who built the Stover Building in 1923. Photo found online.

Walter A. Gompertz, who opened a hardware store in the Stover Building in 1924. He served on Berkeley's Board of Trustees in 1909. Oakland Tribune newspaper photo found online.



The Stover Sanitarium in San Luis Obispo, designed by William H. Weeks in 1911. Now used for offices. Found online.

Application for Building Permit.

CLASS A-B AND C BUILDING

Application is hereby made to the Department of Buildings and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for permission to Build a One story 4 room class C building.

on the ^{corner} East of College street 60'-0" wide of Ashley street.

Being Lot No. 1 & 2 Block A Elmwood Park Tract.

According to plans and Specifications herewith submitted. All provisions of the Building Law will be complied with in the erection, of said building whether specified herein or not.

Estimated entire cost of building \$ 17,000.00 Extreme height of building 22 ft.

Size of Lot 70'-0" by 115'-0" feet. Size of proposed building 70'-0" ft. by 65'-0" ft.

Building to be occupied as Stores by (No.) families.

	WALLS			PIERS OR COLUMNS		JOISTS		GIRDERS			
	HEIGHT	MATERIAL	THICKNESS SIDE FRONT	MATERIAL	SIZE	MATERIAL	SIZE	LONGEST SPAN	MATERIAL	SIZE	LONGEST SPAN
Footings											
Foundations											
Basement											
1st story											
2nd story											
3rd story											
4th story											
5th story											
6th story											
7th story											
8th story											

Light shaft wall covering to be of Composition Roof Pitch 1" to 1 foot.

Roof covered with Composition Roof Pitch 1" to 1 foot.

Chimneys of no lined with no any patent flues? no

Gas grate flues to be patent chimney or brick?

Any dumb waiters or chutes? Any elevator (freight or passenger)?

Cove brackets will be solid.

Name of Owner of Ground Mr. A. Storer Res. Address San Luis Obispo.

Name of Owner of Building Mr. A. Storer Res. Address " "

Name of Lessee of Building " " Res. Address " "

Name of Architect or Designer W. H. Wickes Bus. Address 369 Pine St. S. F.

Name of Builder E. P. Young Bus. Address 328 Post St. Bldg. Woodland, Cal.

I hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

2949-51-53-55 College

E. P. Young Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder.
Address Woodland, Calif.

NOTE This Permit expires one year from date unless sooner revoked by the City Council.

Date JUL 30 1923

Permit No. 14598



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 26
Cianciarulo Building
2941 College Avenue



The Cianciarulo Building, 2941 College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Address:** 2941, 2943, 2945 College Avenue
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 052-1567-01900
(Elmwood Park Tract, Block A, Lot 28)
Dimensions: 50 feet x 120 feet
Cross Streets: Ashby Avenue and Russell Street
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 11871
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
a. Building(s): Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
b. Landscape or Open Space: No
c. Historic Site: No
d. District: Yes
e. Other: Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Cianciarulo Building
Commonly Known Name: not known
6. **Date of Construction:** 1923 **Factual:** Yes
Source of Information: City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 13821, 7 April 1923
7. **Architect:** A. W. Smith, Oakland
8. **Builder:** John Perona, Builders Exchange, Oakland
9. **Style:** Storefront
10. **Original Owners:** Battista Cianciarulo, 1016 Castro Street, Oakland
Original Use: commercial (3 stores)
11. **Present Owner:** Gordon John K Tr, Mitchell Janis L Tr, Gordon Molly M Tr
Present Occupant: La Tour Salon, (2941 College); Bill's Trading Post (2943 College); Book Society (2945 College)
12. **Present Use:** commercial (3 stores)
Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** C-E
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Excellent **Interior:** unknown **Grounds:** Ø
Has the property's exterior been altered? minimally

14. Description.

A one-story brick building with three traditional shopfronts. Two retain original tile bulkheads, deeply set entries, and mosaic tile paving. The northernmost had the entrance brought forward and has newer glazed black tile and a smaller paved area. The façade, faced in white, glazed terra cotta “bricks,” resembles the Classical design of the slightly later Stover Building next door in a simplified, abstracted way. Panels in the frieze and on the four piers are suggested by an outline of colored tile on the

background of white tile. The cornice is suggested in the same way. The tiles are set in a rough sand mortar; the colored tiles set farther apart so that the mortar is part of the design.

In recent years, plywood signs, which had covered the transoms, have been removed. The southernmost shopfront was completely restored during the Pandemic, with tiled bulkhead painted to resemble the original tile. Awning boxes have been covered over.

15. History.

The why and wherefore of the existence of the Cianciarulo Building is unknown. We do know that it was built for Battiste Cianciarulo, an Oakland resident and a native of Italy. He and his wife Teresa and other family members lived on Castro Street around the corner from Governor Pardee’s residence on 11th Street. Battiste and his brother Michael ran a wine and liquor business on Clay Street.

It is unknown whether Battiste was already an investor in real estate when he purchased Lot 28, likely in 1922 from the estate of Floyd C. Curry, owner of both Lot 28 and Lot 27 to the north. Construction began on the new building in April 1923, just four months before Mrs Stover began work on her building next door.

Two types of business have been in the building for a very long time. Mrs. Evelyn Wilds ran the Van Ess Beauty Shop at 493 10th Street in Oakland, at least as early as 1922. The Van Ess Beauty Shop was one of the first businesses in the new Cianciarulo Building, opening in 1941 College. Mrs. Wilds had been located in the Cianciarulos’ neighborhood; perhaps Mrs. Cianciarulo was a customer and told her of the new building in Berkeley. Mrs. Wilds lived in the back of her shop on College. (In 1954, the business was advertised as having a “room upstairs to live in.”) The shop at 2941 College is now occupied by

La Tour Salon, reusing the sign from Van Ess.

The other longtime business in the Cianciarulo Building is Bill’s Trading Post at 2943 College. The shop began about 1940 as Bill’s Model Shoe, although the shop had been leased since 1937 to James L. Brown as Brown’s Model Shoe. By 1939 he had moved his shop to Solano Avenue. William C. Gulley moved to this side of the bay from San Francisco with his family and opened his own store in the space, and, as with the Van Ess sign, most likely used the same sign, changing “Brown’s” to “Bill’s.” This was a busy and successful shoe repair business even after William Gulley’s death in 1966, when his daughter Peggy Casey took over the running of the shop.

To quote from Peggy Casey’s *San Francisco Chronicle* obituary in 2017, “With the death of her father in 1966, Peggy took over his Bill’s Model Shoe Shop business in Berkeley’s Elmwood district and transformed it into The Trading Post and Gem Gallery. Here Peggy thrived as a College Avenue icon, quickly becoming president of the Elmwood Merchants Association, and later president of the Zonta women’s service organization, as well as President of the Berkeley Women’s Chamber of Commerce.”

When the next-door gun store closed, the Trading Post had the opportunity to expand into that shop space, with the Gem Gallery in one and

the Trading Post in the other. Since 2019, the two have been consolidated in one space, 2943 College.

From March 1927 to the end of 1930, the Elmwood commercial district was given an international flair with the Yama Yama Dining Room at 2945 College. The proprietors, Irma and Paul Berger, had long been in the restaurant business. To quote from the *Berkeley Gazette* on the occasion of the restaurant's first anniversary, "For more than 26 years, Berger served in the kitchens of the Palace Hotel, the Fairmont

Hotel, and the University Club. Mrs. Berger, a native of Hungary, was 15 years in New York as head of the Sunshine Pastry Shops, and prior to coming to Berkeley, was associated with the Country Club of Menlo Park. She was one of the first Hungarians to enter the restaurant business in America." The Yama Yama was especially popular with businessmen during the lunch hour, and a frigidaire in the kitchen made "possible a light lunch that is unusually cool and refreshing."

16. Significance.

The Cianciarulo Building is significant for its architecture and for the amazing longevity of its businesses.

This is one of the few commercial buildings in Berkeley designed by prolific Oakland architect, A. W. Smith, known for his many residences in Oakland and Berkeley. In Berkeley he also designed the India Block (1903) and the Barker Block (1905), both City of Berkeley Landmarks, as well as the Lucky's at Telegraph and Haste (1933), his last building.

The Cianciarulo Building exhibits an intact and exceptional use of glazed tile, which covers the entire façade. The overall façade tile is white and it is accented by small square tiles in Arts & Crafts colors (maroon, dark blue-green, light blue, yellow-orange, tan, and gray) that delineate a two-dimensional Classical treatment of the façade. The piers have vertical panels suggested; the frieze has the suggestion of both horizontal and rectangular panels; and there is the suggestion of a cornice made by a double row of colored tiles flanked by rows of white tiles stood on end. Two shopfronts remain intact with transoms visible, recessed entries, and original tile bulkheads. The northernmost shopfront received a sympathetic remodel in 1939.

With its all-over use of tile, the Cianciarulo Building is a colorful and unique shopfront

building in the Elmwood Commercial District. It is unique in the City of Berkeley, as well.

The Cianciarulo Building is significant in the cultural history of the Elmwood commercial district with its two long-running businesses, indicating the stability of the district and reflecting its enveloping sense of community. Mrs. Evelyn Wilds opened a beauty salon in the northernmost shopfront when the building was completed 101 years ago. Even through change of ownership—and recent change of name—the beauty salon exists today in the same location. Bill's Trading Post can trace its lineage back 85 years when William Gulley opened Bill's Model Shoe at 2945 College, and even further back to Brown's Model Shoe in the late 1930s. Peggy Casey, William Gulley's daughter and later owner of the business, with her abiding interest in Native American culture, transformed it into The Trading Post and Gem Gallery, selling items that Indians brought to the Trading Post. She was an important figure in Berkeley's business world. During her career, Peggy Casey served as President of the Elmwood Merchants Association, President of Zonta, and President of the Berkeley Women's Chamber of Commerce.

Features to Preserve.

- the entire shopfronts: mosaic tile entrance paving, tile bulkheads, doors, copper window frames
- the façade with all its tile facing
- the transom windows

17. Historic Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes
Architectural Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

18. Is the property endangered? No

19. Bibliography.

Building Permit Application No. 13821, 7 April 1923; as well as several alteration applications.

Block books and Sanborn maps

Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.

Ormsby Donogh Real Estate File (1939–1977), BAHA.

Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.

“A. W. Smith . . . Architect Extraordinaire” by Betty Marvin, *The Alameda Architectural Preservation Society* [Newsletter], January 2006.

Berkeley Tourist and Business Survey, 1924.

“A Profile of the Elmwood: Trends and Counter-Trends in a Berkeley Neighborhood Commercial District” Joanna Callenbach, Geography 181 class paper, Spring 1978.

ancestry.com

“Yama-Yama Dining Room Celebrates First Anniversary,” *Berkeley Daily Gazette*, 21 March 1928.

“The ‘20s Boom on College Ave.” by Anthony Bruce, *Berkeley Gazette*, 5 May 1982.

“Old Fashioned Trading Post on College Avenue” by Rebecca Poole, *The Berkeley Voice*, 1 February 1984.

“Snapp Shots: Casey was Pillar of Berkeley’s Elmwood District.” by Martin Snapp, *East Bay Times*, 22 May 2017.

Mary Jane “Peggy” Casey (1925–2017) obituary, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 2017.

20. Recorder

Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird, 2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

4 September 2025

Additional Photographs.



*The Cianciarulo Building.
Anthony Bruce, 2020.*



*The Cianciarulo Building.
Van Ess Beauty Salon (2941);
Gun Store (2943); The Trading Post (2945).
Anthony Bruce, 1982.*



*The Cianciarulo Building.
Van Ess Beauty Shop (2941);
Manney's Men's Shop (2943);
Brown's Model Shoe Shop.
Ormsby Donogh, 1939,
Donogh Real Estate File,
BAHA..*

Additional Photographs.



Cianciarulo Building: northernmost shopfront with mosaic tile pavement and newer tile bulkhead.
Anthony Bruce, 2025.

Cianciarulo Building: bulkhead tile restored by skillful painting, southernmost shopfront.
Anthony Bruce, 2025.



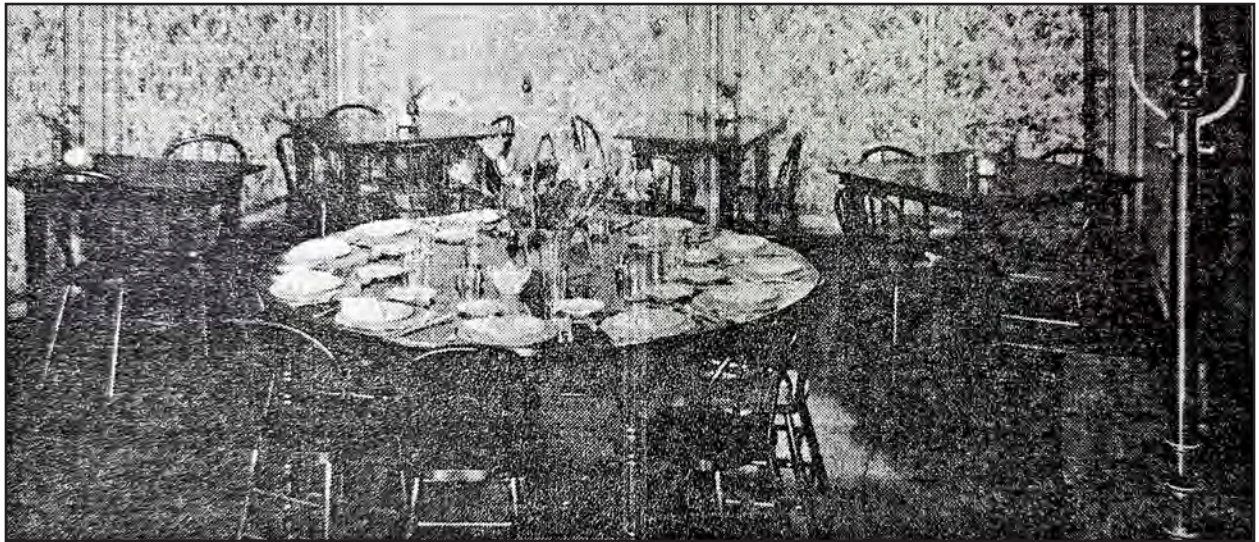
Cianciarulo Building: southernmost shopfront with mosaic tile pavement.
Anthony Bruce, 2025.

Cianciarulo Building: examples of colored tile suggesting a vertical panel in one of the piers.
Anthony Bruce, 2025.



William Gulley in front of Bill's Model Shoe at 2945 College Avenue. Photo found online.

Additional Photographs.



Cianciarulo Building. The latest section of the Yama Yama Dining Room at 2945 College Avenue. This room was used for club luncheons and special occasions. Eventually, the restaurant expanded into two shopfronts: 2943 and 2945. Berkeley Daily Gazette, 21 March 1928.



Irma and Paul Berger, proprietors of the Yama Yama Dining Room. Berkeley Daily Gazette, 21 March 1928.

Application for Building Permit.

CLASS A-B AND C BUILDING

Application is hereby made to the Department of Buildings and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for permission to Build a 1 story store room-class building.

on the corner of College street 135 feet 11 of Ashby ave

Side College Block Tract

Being Lot No. Tract

According to plans and Specifications herewith submitted. All provisions of the Building Law will be complied with in the erection, of said building whether specified herein or not.

Estimated entire cost of building \$ 10,466.50 Extreme height of building 20 ft.

Size of Lot 49 ft. 9" by 150 feet. Size of proposed building 49 ft. 9" ft. by 60 ft.

Building to be occupied as store by (No.) families.

	WALLS			PIERS OR COLUMNS		JOISTS			GIRDERS		
	HEIGHT	MATERIAL	THICKNESS SIDE FRONT	MATERIAL	SIZE	MATERIAL	SIZE	LONGEST SPAN	MATERIAL	SIZE	LONGEST SPAN
Footings		<u>as per plans & Specifications</u> <u>filed</u>									
Foundations											
Basement											
1st story											
2nd story											
3rd story											
4th story											
5th story											
6th story											
7th story											
8th story											

Light shaft wall covering to be of

Roof covered with tar & gravel Pitch

Chimneys of lined with any patent flues?

Gas grate flues to be patent chimney or brick ?

Any dumb waiters or chutes? Any elevator (freight or passenger)

Cove brackets will be solid.

Name of Owner of Ground B. Bianciardi Res. Address 1016 Castro St. Oak

Name of Owner of Building B. Bianciardi Res. Address 6

Name of Lessee of Building Res. Address

Name of Architect or Designer W. R. Smith Bus. Address

Name of Builder John Perona Bus. Address Builders Exchange Oak

I We hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue hereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

2941-2943-2945
College

John Perona
Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder.

Address

THIS Permit expires one year from date unless sooner revoked by the City Council.

Date APR -7 1923

✓ Permit No. 13821-



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 27
Curry Building
2935 College Avenue



The Curry Building, 2935 College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Address:** 2935, 2937, 2939 College Avenue
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 052-1567-02000
(Elmwood Park Tract, Block A, Lot 27)
Dimensions: 54 feet x 120 feet
Cross Streets: Ashby Avenue and Russell Street
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 11872
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
 - a. **Building(s):** Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
 - b. **Landscape or Open Space:** No
 - c. **Historic Site:** No
 - d. **District:** Yes
 - e. **Other:** Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Curry Building
Commonly Known Name: not known
6. **Date of Construction:** 1916 **Factual:** Yes
Source of Information: City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 6055,
5 December, 1916
7. **Architect:** Eugene K. Martin
8. **Builder:** day's work
9. **Style:** Storefront
10. **Original Owners:** Floyd C. Curry, 2745 Elmwood Avenue
Original Use: commercial (4 stores)
11. **Present Owner:** Noble William F Tru
Present Occupant: Old Salt Merchants (2935 College); Elements (2937 College)
12. **Present Use:** commercial (2 stores)
Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** C-E
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Excellent **Interior:** Excellent **Grounds:** Ø
Has the property's exterior been altered? yes

14. Description.

Built in 1916, the Curry Building is one story with wood frame and cement plaster surface on the street façade. Typical of the 1910s, it was designed in a slightly Prairie/Viennese Secession style. The frieze features raised geometric shapes: squares, rectangles, and diamonds. This ornamentation is continued on the piers at each end of the building. Between the frieze and the parapet there is a bit of original rustic siding visible (three widths worth). The missing cornice may have originally hid the wood siding. There were four chevrons that extended across the top of the parapet interspersed with box-like shapes that were the extension of the piers (of which there were originally five). The chevrons delineated the original four shopfronts. The current shopfront configuration dates from

1937 when the Ivy Shoppe moved into the larger space from its former location on the west side of the block.

The larger shopfront at 2937 College has a central recessed entry flanked by plate glass displays set on a black tile base. The smaller shopfront at 2935 College was altered to create an off-center entry. The bulkhead here is also surfaced in glossy black tile. The entrances to both have concrete paving. At 2937 the paving slopes up to the door due to the slope of the street. Both shops have traditional wood doors with a vertical window panel in the center. Awning boxes across the two shops have been covered over.

15. History.

Floyd Calvin Curry, native of Ohio, went to Nevada to satisfy his interest in mining, where he became active in gypsum mining. By 1907, he and Governor Jewett Adams and another colleague had formed the Nevada Gypsum Company in Mound, a gypsum-rich location near Carson City. The firm had an office in San Francisco and Vice-President Curry was often there. The company's product, Empire Plaster, which predated the new company, was said to have rebuilt San Francisco after the 1906 disaster.

In 1909, Floyd Curry married Vera Davis Davidson in San Francisco. She was from Carson City and they had met there. Vera had lost her husband and had a young daughter named Katherine. In 1912 the Nevada Gypsum Company was sold to the Pacific Portland Cement Company, and with his windfall, Floyd Curry decided to build a house in Berkeley in July 1913, a few months after their son John Truman was born. The Currys' house at 2745 Elmwood Avenue was designed by John Sullivan

who had designed the 1912 Dondero Building at College and Russell. And for good measure, they built a second identical house next door at 2743. Also in 1913, Floyd Curry invested in property in Block A of Elmwood Park: two lots on College Avenue.

But it was not until 1916 that Floyd Curry improved the northernmost of his two lots with a one-story commercial building designed for four shops. The architect was Berkeleyan Eugene K. Martin. Martin was raised in Germany and studied in Berlin. He did post graduate work at the University of California, graduating in 1912. He lived in Berkeley until about World War I when he moved to Southern California, marrying, and eventually settling in Los Angeles. His most notable work from his years in Berkeley is the First Baptist Church at Dana and Haste, built in 1914. Of the only four buildings Martin designed during his few years in Berkeley only three remain: the church, the Curry Building, and a small house on Santa Fe.

The earliest known tenants in the Curry Build-

ing were, in 1922, Fred C. Eike's Standard Meat Market (2935); John T. Hansen's Fruit Market (2937); and from 1924, U. C. Battery and Electric Company (2939) and S. Sasaki's Art Goods (2933). One of the best-remembered businesses in the Curry Building was The Ivy Shoppe, which was the Elmwood district's old-fashioned dry goods store. It was opened at 2904 College Avenue in 1922 by Henry Knoth in the newly completed Bischoff Building, selling notions. The story passed down through the years was that the shop was named for his daughter. There were two more owners: Maurice Rubenstein & Son in 1925 and Joseph Sirbu in 1927 before the business was purchased by Antonio N. Ferroggiaro in 1928. The Ferroggiaros lived nearby on Garber Street. It was under his ownership that the Ivy Shoppe opened in expanded quarters in the Curry Building in about 1937. Three shops had been combined into one large space, befitting a dry goods store. The shop was run by Clara Ferroggiaro after her husband died in 1939. By 1942 it was owned by Felix Alexander Lenhart, who was born in Prague and arrived in this country in 1939. He made his home at the Claremont Hotel during his proprietorship. He sold the Ivy Shoppe in 1957 to Pauline Pedrozzo, who ran the business until it closed around 1988.

Another long-time business in the Curry Building was Eastell's Barber Shop in the northernmost shop (2935 College) since about 1934.

16. Significance.

The Curry Building is significant as one of the ten remaining buildings built in the Elmwood commercial district during the pre-World War I phase of development from 1907 to 1916. With its stucco façade and geometric decoration, the Curry Building reflects the architectural style for small commercial buildings of that era: a rather loose amalgam of Prairie style and Viennese Secession.

The shop dates back to 1923 when Quincy A. Rose opened a barber shop at 2927 College in the new Dye Building. This was quickly sold to Nick Batsis who then sold it to Eastell Bros. (Arthur T. and George A.) in 1924. After a few years, Arthur became the sole owner of the shop. The new shop in the Curry Building was sleek and modern, with all the latest accoutrements, as well as four large, comfortable adjustable barber chairs. Arthur and his brother immigrated from England in 1921 and came to Berkeley in 1923. Arthur settled in the neighborhood, purchasing a John Hudson Thomas-designed house at 2937 Magnolia Street where he lived with his wife Louise and their two children. Three generations of the Eastell family called the house home. The barber shop stayed in business after Arthur's retirement in the 1950s and after his death in 1969. Eastell's Barber Shop finally closed about 1974 during a time when men were turning away from traditional barber shops.

Floyd C. Curry, the owner of the building, died in 1920 after a short illness. He was only 44 years old. Mrs. Curry remained in their Elmwood Avenue home until 1947, but the Curry Building was sold. Harry Scott and Helen Adams Martin purchased it in 1925. He was the son of Harry M. Martin who had built the Martin Building at 2905 College in 1916. The Curry Building continued to be owned by members of the Martin family into the 1970s.

The building is also significant for housing two of the longest-running businesses in the Elmwood: Eastell's Barber Shop and The Ivy Shoppe dry goods store. These businesses were a vital part of the commercial district and the surrounding neighborhoods. They offered necessary goods and services for everyday life and helped to make the Elmwood commercial district the bustling "Main Street" for this section of the city.

Features to Preserve.

- the entire shopfronts: glossy black tile bulkheads, doors, display windows
- the geometric ornamentation
- the transom windows

17. Historic Value— Neighborhood: Yes City: No

Architectural Value— Neighborhood: Yes City: No

18. Is the property endangered? No

19. Bibliography.

Building Permit Application No. 6055, 5 December 1916; as well as several alteration applications.

Block books and Sanborn maps

Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.

Ormsby Donogh Real Estate File (1939–1977), BAHA.

Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.

ancestry.com

Various Elmwood directory folders, published between 1974 and 2002.

“Shops in the Elmwood: An Urbane Heritage” by Denise Parker Differding, *Berkeley Gazette*, 28 July 1983.

“Expansion Approval May Split Merchants” by Kay Hwangbo, *The Berkeley Voice*, 1980s.

20. Recorder.

Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association,

c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird, 2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

9 September 2025

Additional Photographs.



The Curry Building, showing the space once filled by The Ivy Shoppe. The current shop, Elements, has now been there about thirty years.

Anthony Bruce, 2025.



The Curry Building. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Longtime owners of the Curry Building: Helen Adams and Harry Scott Martin. Found online.



The Curry and Cianciarulo buildings. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

Additional Photographs.



The Curry Building, with Ethnic Arts in the former Ivy Shoppe space. The business received a BAHA Preservation Award in 1991 for its colorful paint job. Van Ess Beauty Shop at the right. Anthony Bruce, 1990.



The Curry Building; the barber shop is gone; Ivy Shoppe still there. Anthony Bruce, 1982.



The Curry Building with the decorative parapet still intact. Ormsby Donogh, 1939, Donogh Real Estate File, BAHA.

Additional Photographs.



Felix Lenhart, fifth owner, in the Ivy Shoppe. Byron Bolfig, November 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.



Floyd C. Curry with his son John on the front steps of the Curry home at 2745 Elmwood Avenue. Found online.

Arthur T. Eastell seen through the window of Eastell's Barber Shop. Byron Bolfig, November 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.

APPLICATION FOR BUILDING PERMIT FRAME BUILDING

Application is hereby made to the Department of Buildings and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for permission to build One story 3 stories wood frame 180 ft. North Ashby corner on the East of College street 180 feet 70 of Ashby street. Side Being Lot No. 27 Block A Elmwood Park Tract

According to plans and Specifications herewith submitted. All provisions of the Building Law will be complied with in the erection of said building whether specified herein or not.

Estimated entire cost of Building \$ 2400.00

Building to be occupied as _____ by (No.) _____ families

Size of Lot 54 by 120 feet.

Size of proposed building 54 ft. by 60 ft. Extreme height of building 18 ft.

Height in clear of cellar _____ ft. in. Height in clear of first story 14 ft. in.

Height in clear of second story _____ ft. in. Height in clear of third story _____ ft. in.

Foundation to be of (material) Concrete (Thickness) _____ inches. greatest height of foundation 12 inches.

Width of footings 12 x 18 inches.

Mud sills 2 x 6 Min sills _____ Girders _____ Post on piers _____ If piers are used, give size _____ by _____ ft. on centers.

Size of underpinning 2 x 6 inches _____ inches O. C. Size of studs in first story 2 x 6 inches _____ inches O. C.

Size of studs in second story _____ inches _____ inches O. C. Size of studs in third story _____ inches _____ inches O. C.

Exterior wall covering to be of Rustic Light shaft wall covering to be of _____

All outside walls covered with singles or plaster will be close boarded.

First floor joists 2 x 10 inches _____ inches on centers. Longest span between supports 10 ft.

Second floor joists _____ inches _____ inches on centers. Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Third floor joists _____ inches _____ inches on centers. Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Ceiling joists _____ inches _____ inches on centers. Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Rafters _____ inches _____ inches on centers. Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Roof covered with Tar & Gravel Steep or flat? Flat Pitch _____

Studs in bearing partitions will be same as outside walls of each story.

Chimneys of _____ lined with _____ any patent flues? _____

Gas grate flues to be patent chimney or brick? _____

Any dumb waiters or chutes? _____ Any elevator (freight or passenger)? _____

Corn brackets will be solid.

Name of Owner of Ground J. C. Curry Residence Address 2745 Elmwood Ave

Name of Owner of Building _____ Residence Address _____

Name of Lessee of Building _____ Residence Address _____

Name of Architect or Designer E. H. Keaton Residence Address _____

Name of Builder Day's work Residence Address _____

I hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all this strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

2935
27 College
39

Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder. J. C. Curry
Address 2745 Elmwood Ave

This Permit expires one year from date unless sooner revoked by the City Council.

Date DEC - 5 1916 Permit No. 6055



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 28
Dye Building
2921 College Avenue



The Dye Building, 2921 College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Address:** 2921, 2923, 2925, 2927 College Avenue
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 052-1567-02100
(Elmwood Park Tract, Block A, Lot 26)
Dimensions: 50 feet x 120 feet
Cross Streets: Ashby Avenue and Russell Street
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 11873
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
 - a. **Building(s):** Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
 - b. **Landscape or Open Space:** No
 - c. **Historic Site:** No
 - d. **District:** Yes
 - e. **Other:** Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Dye Building
Commonly Known Name: not known
6. **Date of Construction:** 1922 **Factual:** Yes
Source of Information: City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 12953, 1 November, 1922
7. **Architect:** Roy O. Long Co.
8. **Builder:** Roy O. Long Co., 2114 Shattuck Avenue
9. **Style:** Storefront
10. **Original Owners:** Mildred M. Dye & James S. Dye, 2915 College Avenue
Original Use: commercial (4 stores & 1 dwelling: the Dyes lived in the building)
11. **Present Owner:** The Herbert Michael Jorgensen and Jean M. Jorgensen Revocable Living Trust-1996
Present Occupant: ImagiKnit (2921 College); Organic Greens/Elmwood (2925 College)
12. **Present Use:** commercial (2 stores)
Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** C-E
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Excellent **Interior:** unknown **Grounds:** Ø
Has the property's exterior been altered? Yes

14. Description.

A one-story, wood-frame structure with cement plaster exterior, originally containing four shops and a dwelling for the building owners. Now there are two shops.

Detailing consists of a cornice and frieze of rectangles, squares, and diamonds. Below the frieze, four panels delineate the original four shops. Five small shields fill the spaces between the panels, and a circular motif highlights the upper corners of the shopfront display windows.

In 1944, the building was streamlined by Bruce Evander for his new business, Furs by Bruce, and it was converted into one large retail space. A large black panel for the sign completely covered the upper half of the façade, and tan

Vitrolite structural glass panels covered the piers and bulkheads. The new façade remained in place into the 1970s. When the panels were removed, the original detailing was revealed. The northernmost pier retains its Carrera glass surface, serving as a piece of building history. Quoins enliven the two restored piers.

The traditional lines of the single north shopfront have existed since the streamlining, including its slightly recessed entry. The south shopfront was reconfigured and redone in rough wood in the 1970s. It has since been remodeled again with a similar recessed entry but also with a more closed-up appearance. Instead of display windows, higher, smaller, divided-lite windows have been installed to better function for its current restaurant use.

15. History.

James Southworth Dye was born in New Mexico in 1893. Starting with a shoe store in Winslow, Arizona, that he operated with his business partner, Mayor J. A. Greaves, Dye's life's work was in the shoe repair business. In 1917, he married Mildred Mabel Seidel in Winslow. The next year found the Dyes living in Berkeley on College Avenue. They rented space at 2915 College in the McCullough Building for their shoe repair shop and they lived in the back of the shop. Mildred was James' business partner as well as wife; their business investment was mostly her money (she also owned a Paige automobile). In early 1921 Mildred purchased Lot 26, adjacent to their shop/residence to the south, from Oscar Barber who had once had a brown-shingle house on the property. Did she plan to build on the vacant lot? The next year Mildred sued her husband. She claimed that while she was away on a trip, James sold her interest in the business to Thomas Whittle who worked with him. Apparently they were reconciled, as in November, construction was begun on the Dye Building next door.

The new building had four stores and one

dwelling space. James Dye ran his shoe repair business from 2925 College, and husband and wife resided in the rear. This arrangement only lasted a few years: by 1926 Mildred and James were in San Francisco, living separately. The new owner of the Dye Building was Martha E. Hebard.

Martha Elizabeth Schroth Hebard was a widow from a pioneer family who lived in Berkeley. She died soon after buying the property, and it went to her two sisters Florence Schroth Williams and Ellen Schroth Mauzy, whose husband Byron Mauzy was a University of California Regent. Ellen died in 1946 and around 1954 Florence sold the property to the late Charles Dorsch's wife Louise, and his son and daughter-in-law Graydon and Helen. Charles had owned the Romie Building. They in turn put the building up for sale in late 1959 and it was purchased in 1960 by William H. McNab, longtime proprietor of McNab's Market at 2051 University Avenue. He died the following year, but his son Bill McNab took over and poured his heart into improving the building with a retrofit and a conservatory at the rear of

2925 College. McNab descendents have continued to own the Dye Building.

Several businesses made an impression on both the building and the district. In 1944, Bruce Morton Evander opened Furs by Bruce. From Seattle, he had earned a master's degree at the Chicago Institute of Art and owned a fur business in his hometown. He arrived in Berkeley in 1939 and in early 1944 took over all the shopfronts in the Dye Building to return to the fur business. He refaced the lower half of the façade with tan Vitrolite and installed a smooth, black backdrop across the upper half for the large free-standing script lettering that read "Furs by Bruce." When the business opened in December, it offered a touch of high-style sophistication, not only with the wares that were offered, but in its new architectural presence on College Avenue.

In 1947, Bruce Evander leased the northernmost section to Pam and Dewey Watts for the equally sophisticated Pam's Flowers, also with a sign of free-standing lettering. Pam's remained in the building until at least 1960, but Furs by Bruce, although said to have existed here for more than twenty years, appears to have closed by the mid-1950s, with Evander going into the graphics business in Oakland. However, the tan Vitrolite and black backdrop remained for many years.

Bill McNab later uncovered the original ornamented façade and removed the Vitrolite except for five sections of this now extinct building material that remain on the northernmost pier.

In 1973, Gary Gendel, who had opened Sweet Dreams candy shop in the Dondero Building two years before, established the Sweet Dreams Toy Store in the space that had been Pam's Flowers. The freshly uncovered upper part of the building was painted white, with the fanciful ornamentation in color. The store became a fixture in the Elmwood district, as did Gendel himself, who would be seen striding along the sidewalk, going from one of his three stores to

the other. Gary Gendel closed the toy store in June 2023 and he died that August.

Long before the Dye Building was built, there had been a shingled bungalow on the property. It was built in 1909 for newlyweds Ava and Oscar Barber on a lot purchased by her father from the Elmwood Park developers Breed & Bancroft. The Barbers played an important role in the implementation of the nation's first zoning ordinance.

Ava Earle Barber recalled that they built in the new Elmwood Park tract on a College Avenue lot, and that within a few years after moving into their home, a commercial building was built on their block, from lot line to lot line. They were taken aback. By 1915, another commercial building had been built two doors away from the Barbers.

The nearby Claremont subdivision, developed simultaneously with Elmwood Park, had deed restrictions limiting what could be built there: only single-family residences. Elmwood Park did not have deed restrictions. Mrs. Barber felt that purchasers should have been told by the developers when they bought property in Elmwood that there was no guarantee that only *houses* would be built on the adjoining lots. As it happened, only two other houses were built on the Elmwood Park College Avenue lots.

Before zoning, cities, as they grew, naturally created informal districts —residential, commercial, industrial, but there was nothing to prevent the stray shop building or factory from being built in a residential neighborhood, or houses built beside factories. The concept of city planning was in the air in Berkeley around the time the Barber House was built. In 1913, city planner Dr. Werner Hegemann was engaged to make a report on the City of Berkeley. (The report was expanded and ultimately published by both Berkeley and Oakland.) This led to the City establishing a City Planning *Committee* in July 1914, and a full-fledged *commission* in June 1915. Duncan McDuffie, devel-

oper of the Claremont district, whose abiding interest, other than nature conservation, was city planning, was appointed president of the commission. McDuffie had introduced building restrictions in Claremont, knowing that this was the only way to ensure a neighborhood of homogeneous use. Walter Ratcliff, as City Architect, also served on the first commission.

In the Commission's report to the City in June 1916, it was stated that its most important accomplishment during its first year was securing a zoning ordinance for Berkeley. The zoning ordinance was established by the City Council on March 28, 1916, several months before New York City (considered the first city in the United States to have a zoning ordinance) adopted theirs in July 1916.

As Berkeley has long been considered a city of homes, the first ordinance defined only different types of residential districts, with commercial and industrial to follow. Another feature of the original ordinance was that zoning districts were to be granted by the City in response to petition by interested property owners. The Commission wrote that the purpose of such an ordinance was to "further the natural grouping of like activities by preventing sporadic invasions [of a different type of use], and thus to bring about the orderly and economic development of the city, to stabilize values, protect property owners, and conserve the public health and welfare."

15. Significance.

The Dye Building has architectural significance for the Elmwood commercial district. Not only is it compatible in scale and proportion, but the treatment of its façade is unique. Although its decorative elements are related to those of the buildings constructed in the 1910s, here they are combined to give the building a fanciful and cheerful countenance. The blocky quoins, the circular elements, the diamonds and squares,

It is of interest that Petition No. 1 was from the residents of Elmwood Park, and this first petition was noted in the report. The Commission recommended a district of single-family dwellings only, *except for the first 100 feet east of College Avenue and the 100 feet west of Claremont Avenue*. The neighborhood finally received the assurance that it would remain a neighborhood of family homes. It may very well be that the unhappy position of the Barber house on College Avenue aroused the neighborhood to petition for zoning.

The Barbers, however, were left out in the cold by the City Council's decision. Soon after the Council's ruling another commercial building was constructed on the lot adjoining the Barber property, and more would follow. At the end of 1916 the Barbers had their house physically moved to the lot at 2523 Webster Street, where it stands today. They lived there for a few years and then bought a bigger house on Russell Street near Pine (zoned single-family) that would accommodate their family of six, as well as Ava Barber's parents.

When the City's city planning duties were moved from the Civic Art Commission to a newly created City Planning Commission, Oscar Barber was appointed chair. Probably not a coincidence, when the Barber House on College Avenue likely had been the impetus for Berkeley's first zoning decision in 1916.

and the shields impart a fairytale quality, especially the way the building is now painted. This light-hearted commercial building was a most appropriate long-term home for a toy store.

The building has been an important part of the cultural heritage of the district. It housed two popular businesses of up-to-the-minute Modern design that added a touch of downtown sophistication to the district. It also housed a

beloved toy store for almost fifty years, a store that continuously drew shoppers to the district.

The property is also significant for the role its location played in the implementation of Berkeley's (and the nation's) first zoning ordinance.

Features to Preserve.

- the stucco façade with its ornamentation of shields, diamonds, squares, circular motifs, and quoin -like blocks
- the five remaining pieces of tan Vitrolite (not necessarily to be preserved *on* the building)
- the transom windows

17. Historic Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: No

Architectural Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: No

18. Is the property endangered? No

19. Bibliography.

Building Permit Application No. 12953, 1 November, 1922; as well as several alteration applications.

Block books and Sanborn maps

City directories.

Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.

Ormsby Donogh Real Estate File (1939–1977), BAHA.

Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.

Berkeley Tourist and Business Survey, 1924.

ancestry.com

“Sweet Dreams Owner Dies Shortly after Closing 50-year-old Elmwood Toy Store” by Joanne Furio, *Berkeleyside*, 15 September 2023.

Interview with Ava Earle Barber, conducted by Anthony Bruce, 1970s.

20. Recorder.

Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association,

c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird, 2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

13 September 2025

Additional Photographs.



*The Dye Building.
Tenants: Sweet Dreams,
(2921 College); Mug
Shop (2925 College)
Anthony Bruce, 1982.*

*below: The Dye Build-
ing, newly modernized for
Furs by Bruce, 1944.
Donogh Real Estate File,
BAHA.*



The Dye Building in 1959. Donogh Real Estate File, BAHA.



The exterior of the new Bruce Fur Shop, 2929 Telegraph Ave., is pictured here much as the establishment will look tomorrow on the occasion of its formal opening at style show set for 2 p.m. The exterior of the new Bruce Fur Shop, 2925 College Ave., is pictured here much as the established Berkeley establishment offers the ultimate in fur fashions to East Bay shoppers.



*The Dye Building.
Tenants: a grocery
(2921 College); Bess
Riner Beauty Salon (2923
College); Ha Wah Wang
Laundry (2925 College);
Bob's Flower Shop (2927
College).
Ormsby Donogh, 1939,
Donogh Real Estate File,
BAHA.*

Additional Photographs.



The Dye Building. Pam Watts of Pam's Flowers. Byron Bolfig, November 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.



The Dye Building. Bruce Evander of Furs by Bruce in his workroom. Byron Bolfig, November 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.

Additional Photographs.



The Ava and Oscar Barber House at 2915 College Avenue. It was designed and built by the Baldwin Building & Investment Company in 1909. The house was moved to Webster Street in late 1916. The newly built McCullough Building can be seen at the left. Courtesy of Ava Barber, BAH.



The Barber House at 2523 Webster Street, its location since 1916. Anthony Bruce, 2021.



Envelope from Pam's Flowers; card from Furs by Bruce. Courtesy of Anthony Bruce.

WRITE IN INK

APPLICATION FOR BUILDING PERMIT FRAME BUILDING

Application is hereby made to the Department of Buildings and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for permission to build a 1 story 7 room frame building on the corner of College Ave street 150 feet South of Russell street, being Lot No. 26 Block A Elmwood Park Tract

According to plans and specifications herewith submitted. All provisions of the Building Law will be complied with in the erection of said building whether specified herein or not.

Estimated entire cost of building \$ 8,000.00

Building to be occupied as 4 stores and by (No.) 1 families

Size of lot 50 by 120 feet.

Size of proposed building 50 ft. by 70 ft. Extreme height of building 18 ft.

Height in clear of cellar 9 ft. under apt in. Height in clear of first story 14 ft. under apt in.

Height in clear of second story " ft. store in. Height in clear of third story " ft. store in.

Foundation to be of (material) Concrete (Thickness) 8 inches, greatest height of foundation 16 inches.

Width of footings 14 inches.

Mud sills 3 x 6 Main sills 4 x 4 Girders - x - Post

on piers - x - If piers are used give size - by - ft. on centers.

Size of underpinning 2 x 4 inches 16 inches O. C. Size of studs in first story 2 x 6 inches 16 inches O. C.

Size of studs in second story - x - inches - inches O. C. Size of studs in third story - x - inches O. C.

Exterior wall coverings to be of Plastic Light shaft wall coverings to be of -

All outside walls covered with shingles or plaster will be close boarded.

First floor joists 2 x 8 inches 16 inches on centers. Longest span between supports 8 ft.

Second floor joists - x - inches - inches on centers. Longest span between supports - ft.

Third floor joists - x - inches - inches on centers. Longest span between supports - ft.

Ceiling joists 2 x 10 inches 16 inches on centers. Longest span between supports 14 ft.

Rafters 2 x 4 inches 32 inches on centers. Longest span between supports 14 ft.

Roof covered with Comp. Steep or flat? Flat Pitch 18" in 12 ft.

Studs in bearing partitions will be same as outside walls of each story.

Chimneys of Frame latter lined with - any patent flues? Three

Gas grate flues to be patent chimney or brick? -

Any dumb waiters or chutes? No Any elevator (freight or passenger)? No

Cove brackets will be solid.

Name of Owner of Ground Mildred M. Dye Residence Address: Same

Name of Owner of Building J. S. Dye Residence Address: -

Name of Lessee of Building Joy O. Long Co. Residence Address: 2114 Shattuck Ave.

Name of Architect or Designer - Residence Address: -

Name of Builder " " " " Residence Address: " " " "

I we hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

2921-25-27 College Ave

Joy O. Long Co.
Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder
2114 Shattuck Ave.

This Permit expires one year from date unless sooner revoked by the City Council.

Date NOV -1 1922

Permit No. 12953

Click Print.



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 29
McCullough Building
2917 College Avenue



The McCullough Building, 2917 College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Address:** 2913, 2915, 2917 College Avenue
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 052-1567-02200
(Elmwood Park Tract, Block A, Lot 25)
Dimensions: 41.5 feet x 120 feet
Cross Streets: Ashby Avenue and Russell Street
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 11874
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
 - a. **Building(s):** Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
 - b. **Landscape or Open Space:** No
 - c. **Historic Site:** No
 - d. **District:** Yes
 - e. **Other:** Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** McCullough Building
Commonly Known Name: not known
6. **Date of Construction:** 1916 **Factual:** Yes
Source of Information: City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 5540,
5 June 1916
7. **Architect:** Edward Wilkins Larmer (designer), 470 Boulevard Way, Oakland
8. **Builder:** Edward Wilkins Larmer
9. **Style:** Storefront
10. **Original Owners:** David McCullough, Magnolia Street
Original Use: commercial (3 stores)
11. **Present Owner:** Bennett Susan L Tr
Present Occupant: Elmwood Village Shoes (2915 College); LaFoot (2917 College)
12. **Present Use:** commercial (2 stores)
Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** C-E
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Excellent **Interior:** unknown **Grounds:** Ø
Has the property's exterior been altered? Yes

14. Description.

Built in 1916, this is a one-story, wood-frame structure, originally housing three shops, and now two. No early photos of the building have been found to show how the area above the transoms may have looked. The 1939 photo shows an absolutely plain, flat exterior.

In 1980, both shopfronts were given rustic makeovers using rough wood and rough rocks. All transoms were covered and the area above the south shopfront was turned into an expanse of purposely unevenly laid wood shingles. The north shop had its transoms hidden behind vertical rough wooden boards. The bulkheads for both shops were faced with rock.

Today, the building has been returned more to its 1939 appearance. Gone are the shingles and the rough rocks. Above the south shop, the area has been returned to its smooth, painted cement plaster. Traditional tile has replaced the rock on the bulkhead. This shop has a squared fixed-in-place electric-blue awning hiding the transoms. The redwood boards still hide the transoms on the north shopfront, but they have been painted to match the rest of the façade. This shopfront still retains one of the few retractable awnings remaining in the Elmwood District.

15. History.

David and Elsie McCullough and their four daughters, Norah, Molly, Elsie, and Mabel, arrived in Berkeley about 1915 from South Africa where they had made their home in Durban. They stayed in Berkeley less than two years, but they made an impression on all they met, and they made a lasting impression on the Elmwood commercial district. Mr. McCullough built the last of the pre-War buildings on College Avenue, with construction begun in June 1916.

The McCullough family lived nearby on Magnolia Street (between Ashby and Webster). They were active members of the Congregational Church, and Norah was the youngest member of the December 1916 graduating class at Berkeley High School where she joined the Camera Club. Once the McCullough Building was completed on College Avenue, the McCulloughs sold it, most likely in preparation for the McCulloughs' departure for South Africa in February 1917. Before they left, they were guests of honor at a farewell dinner given by Mr. and Mrs. A. O. Donogh, owners of the downtown dry goods store that was competition for Hink's. They were also the parents of real estate agent Ormsby Donogh who took the 1939 photo used in this application.

This was to be a temporary stay in South Africa so that Mr. McCullough could look after his

"extensive business interests." They planned to return to Berkeley in two years. Of their new California home town, the McCulloughs had said that they were delighted with Berkeley, declaring it the most congenial and attractive place they have ever made their home. Sadly, they did not return to Berkeley.

The McCulloughs sold the property to Elizabeth E. Smith in November 1916. Sometime in the 1920s, Mrs. Evelyn A. Ratcliff, mother of the architect Walter H. Ratcliff, Jr., purchased the McCullough Building, which she owned until 1944. At that time Frank and Queene Libby bought the building and immediately constructed a warehouse in the rear for their electric business.

The McCullough Building is noted for two long-time commercial activities: shoes and electrical. The building has housed a shoe and/or a shoe repair shop since the time it was built. Thomas and James Gilchrist were the first, offering shoe repair at 2915 College, the center store. They lived in the back of the store. Within a year, by 1918, James S. Dye and his wife Mildred moved into 2915 College, where they lived and operated their own shoe repair business. They built the Dye Building next door in 1922 and moved the shop to 2925 College.

Simultaneously, Francis A. Coles opened his shoe repair business in the Dyes' former space at 2915 College, where he most likely had been an employee since as early as 1919. (His son remembered being in the store then and noticing the many vacant lots.) Mr. Coles was born in England, immigrated to this country in 1891, and worked for a shoe company in San Francisco. He married Katherine Brändlein there in 1900. After a few years in Seattle, the Coles, with their four sons, were living in north Oakland by 1919. Coles Shoes remained in the McCullough Building for over fifty years, at first in a single store, and later expanding into the two northern spaces. In 1941 architect Walter H. Ratcliff, Jr., redesigned the shopfront, giving the shoe store one central entrance. Mr. Coles died in 1954, living nearby at 2731 Ashby Place. Two of his sons, George and Robert, continued to run the business. Under the name Francis A. Coles Shoes, Inc., branch stores were opened on Solano Avenue, Lakeshore in Oakland, and, later, in Orinda and San Francisco. The last remaining store, which was also the first, closed in early 1977.

Almost immediately the shoe store reopened as Paris Shoes under new owners Stan and Sonya Paris. In 1991 the next owners renamed the shop Elmwood Village Shoes. And, to come full circle, Village Shoes also offers shoe repair.

The other long-time business was an electric shop, first run by Fred Cole Porter in the northernmost store, 2913 College, after the building was completed in late 1916. Called the College Avenue Electric Shop, it was claimed by Porter to have been the "oldest established electric shop" on College Avenue. Born in Watsonville, Porter had long been an electrician before opening his own store on College Avenue. He and his family lived nearby at 2732 Stuart Street, being the first owners of this 1909 Leola Hall-designed speculative house. In the early 1920s the Porters moved to a new house in North Berkeley while retaining the store

on College Avenue. Fred Porter died in May, 1927, but it seems that the store had already closed sometime in 1926.

Oakland electrician Frank C. Libby, Sr. moved into the McCullough Building later that year, opening his own College Avenue Electric Shop two doors south at 2917 College, where it remained until it closed in the 1990s. Right from the beginning his son, Frank, Jr., helped at the store. Later, Frank, Jr., took over the business and was owner of the building by 1944. He was a friendly and engaging businessman, offering useful and intriguing advice to customers.

The construction of the McCullough Building was the last straw for Ava and Oscar Barber who lived next door to the south. They had built their house in 1909 on what they thought was a residential block in Elmwood Park. Slowly, commercial buildings began encroaching. The City's first decision under a new zoning ordinance in early 1916 zoned the Elmwood neighborhood for single-family homes, but College Avenue was zoned commercial. The McCullough Building was built soon after and in December of 1916 the Barbers had their house moved to Webster Street.

The Barbers were not the only ones uprooted by the construction of commercial buildings. Banker Orville H. Root lived in a two-story house at 2909 College on the site of the future McCullough Building. Designed by William Mooser & Edward G. Bolles in 1906, it was the fourth house Mr. Root had built on College Avenue, but the first in the 2900 block. Construction began on the Dondero Building at 2901 College in December 1912, one lot away from Mr. Root's home. He moved his house to 2737 Ashby Place in 1913.

16. Significance.

The McCullough Building is significant as a contributing building in the Elmwood Commercial District. Its one-story height and its traditional shopfronts (even with the transoms covered) are entirely compatible with most of the buildings in the district. The northern shop front even has a traditional awning.

The building is also significant for being one of the buildings constructed during the early phase of development (1907–1916), and for being the last building constructed during the this phase.

The building is significant for the part it played during the events centered around the adoption and enactment of the nation's first zoning ordinance. The McCullough Building was constructed directly after the first zoning ruling by the City Council when the first 100 feet of

Elmwood Park fronting on College were zoned commercial (instead of residential as was the rest of the neighborhood). The owners of the house next door, who were the most adversely affected by the commercial growth of College Avenue, moved their house to another street in response to the construction of the McCullough Building.

Lastly, the McCullough Building is significant for the continuity of its businesses over the years. A shoe repair/retail store has been a tenant in the building for the past 108 years, since the building was completed in late 1916. An electric shop was in the building for more than seventy years, also opening when the building was completed in late 1916. These were (are) the types of businesses that made the Elmwood commercial district so successful through the years.

Features to Preserve.

- the traditional shopfronts
- the tile paving at 2917 College
- the transom windows

17. Historic Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: No

Architectural Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: No

18. Is the property endangered? No

19. Bibliography.

Building Permit Application No. 5540, 5 June 1916; as well as several alteration applications.

Block books and Sanborn maps

Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.

Ormsby Donogh Real Estate File (1939–1977), BAHA.

Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.

Berkeley Tourist and Business Survey, 1924.

ancestry.com

Contract notices, *Oakland Tribune*, 11 June 1916.

Deeds, *Berkeley Daily Gazette*, 22 November 1916.

"Family Leaves for Visit in Africa," *Berkeley Daily Gazette*, 2 February 1917.

"Coles' Shoes Goes to Paris: Stan Paris, that is," by Heidi Seney, *The Press*, 1 June 1977.

Olla Podrida, December 1916.

20. Recorder

Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird, 2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

27 September 2025

Additional Photographs.



top and bottom: McCullough Building, College Avenue Electric, 2917 College Avenue. Frank C. Libby, Jr., proprietor. Byron Bolting, November 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.

Additional Photographs.



*The McCullough Building. Paris Shoes (2915 College) and College Avenue Electric Co. (2917 College).
Anthony Bruce, 1982.*

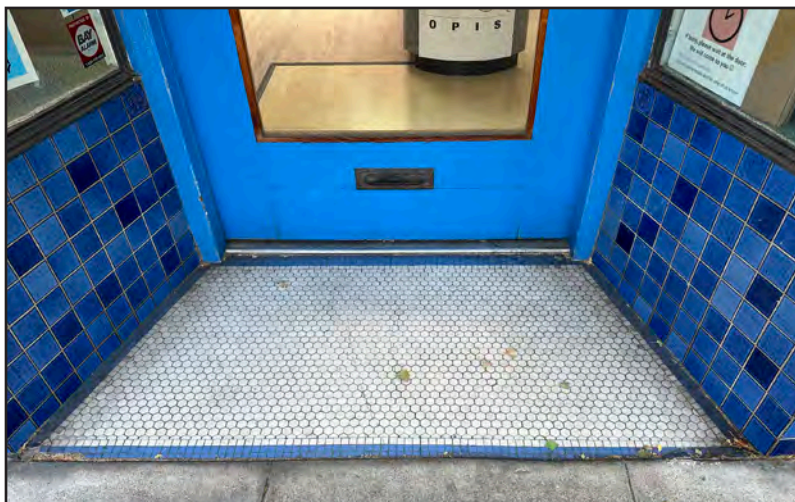


*The McCullough Building. Coles Shoes (2915 College) and College Avenue Electric (2917 College).
Ormsby Donogh, 1939, Donogh Real Estate File, BAHA.*

Additional Photographs.



The McCullough Building: Coles Shoes, 2915 College Avenue. Francis A. Coles, proprietor, on the left. Byron Bolting, 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.



McCullough Building. Tile paving at 2917 College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



High School senior, Norah McCullough, standing in for her parents Elsie and David McCullough. December 1916 Olla Podrida.

WRITE IN INK

APPLICATION FOR BUILDING PERMIT

FRAME BUILDING

Application is hereby made to the Department of Buildings and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for permission to build a one story 3 room frame building

on the East of College street 124 feet South of Russell street.

Side 13 College Block 13 15-17 Tract

Being Lot No. _____ According to plans and Specifications herewith submitted. All provisions of the Building Law will be complied with in the erection of said building whether specified herein or not.

Estimated entire cost of Building \$ 2000

Building to be occupied as store by (No.) _____ families

Size of Lot 4 1/2 by 100 feet.

Size of proposed building 41 ft. by 58 ft. Extreme height of building 16 ft.

Height in clear of cellar _____ in. Height in clear of first story 12 ft. in.

Height in clear of second story _____ ft. in. Height in clear of third story _____ ft. in.

Foundation to be of (material) Concrete (Thickness) 7 inches, greatest height of foundation 12 inches.

Width of footings 12 inches.

Main sills 2 X 6 Main sills X Girders X Post

on piers X If piers are used, give size _____ by _____ ft. on centers.

Size of underpinning X inches _____ inches O. C. Size of studs in first story X inches _____ inches O. C.

Size of studs in second story X inches _____ inches O. C. Size of studs in third story X inches _____ inches O. C.

Exterior wall covering to be of 1/8 Rustic Light shaft wall covering to be of _____

All outside walls covered with singles or plaster will be close boarded.

First floor joists 2 X 8 inches 16 inches on centers lay on a concrete floor Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Second floor joists X inches _____ inches on centers Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Third floor joists X inches _____ inches on centers Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Ceiling joists 2 X 4 inches 16 inches on centers Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Rafters 2 X 6 inches 32 inches on centers Longest span between supports 10 ft.

Roof covered with tar & gravel Steep or flat _____ Pitch 1/4" 15 2 feet

Studs in bearing partitions will be same as outside walls of each story.

Chimneys of _____ lined with _____ any patent flues?

Gas grate flues to be patent chimney or brick?

Any dumb waiters or chutes? _____ Any elevator (freight or passenger)? _____

Cove brackets will be solid.

Name of Owner of Ground D. M. Bullough Residence Address Berkeley

Name of Owner of Building _____ Residence Address _____

Name of Lessee of Building _____ Residence Address _____

Name of Architect or Designer Edw. Sparmer Residence Address Oakland

Name of Builder _____ Residence Address _____

I hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any way accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

13-15-17 College Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder.

Address Edw. Sparmer

This Permit expires one year from date unless sooner revoked by the City Council.

Date _____ Permit No. 5540



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 30
Martin Building
2905 College Avenue



The Martin Building, 2905 College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Address:** 2905, 2907, 2909, 2911 College Avenue
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 052-1567-02300
(Elmwood Park Tract, Block A, Lot 24 and portion of Lot 25)
Dimensions: 62.5 feet x 120 feet
Cross Streets: Ashby Avenue and Russell Street
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 11875
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
 - a. **Building(s):** Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
 - b. **Landscape or Open Space:** No
 - c. **Historic Site:** No
 - d. **District:** Yes
 - e. **Other:** Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Martin Building
Commonly Known Name: not known
6. **Date of Construction:** 1915, 1921 **Factual:** Yes
Source of Information: City of Berkeley Applications for Building Permit No. 4301, No. 5344, No. 9614; 5 January 1915, 28 March 1916, 7 February 1921
7. **Architect:** none listed on applications
8. **Builder:** Jacob Kollmer, 2753 Piedmont Avenue
9. **Style:** Pioneer Storefront
10. **Original Owners:** Harry M. Martin, 2715 Hillegass Avenue
Original Use: commercial (4 stores)
11. **Present Owner:** Bennett Susan L Tr

Present Occupant: The Italian Homemade Company (2905 College); Cotton Basics (2909 College); Freshly Rooted Tribe (2911 College)
12. **Present Use:** commercial (3 stores)
Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** C-E
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Excellent **Interior:** unknown **Grounds:** Ø
Has the property's exterior been altered? Yes

14. Description.

Built in 1915, the Martin Building is a one-story, wood-frame structure with a cement plaster exterior. The building was added to in 1916 and 1921 to create more shops at the south. This accounts for the asymmetrical façade, with a slightly higher parapet over what had been once the center shopfront. The stepped parapet gives the building a bit of an “Old West” character.

Traditional shopfronts feature glossy black tile bulkheads, and wood doors with center lites. Transoms are exposed, although they are obscured by fixed-in-place awnings. The two spaces in the north half of the building are used

by the present delicatessen, with one elongated shopfront and one entrance. This alteration occurred in 1935. The entry door is a pair of swinging doors, likely left from the many years this large space served as a market. The southern two shopfronts are their original size. All three shopfronts have concrete paving leading to the entrances.

The space above the transoms is plain, flat stucco, with flashing serving as a cornice. No photographs have been found prior to 1939, so it is not known whether the building had been decorated in any way originally.

15. History.

Jennie and Harry Martin arrived in Berkeley from Pomona in 1904. For many years, Mr. Martin had been in the real estate business there, and upon arrival, he opened his own office in downtown Berkeley. His son Scott soon joined him in the business venture and remained with the company. In 1906, Harry Martin became a charter member of the newly incorporated Berkeley Real Estate Exchange.

The Martins built a house for the family (including son Scott and daughter Maude) at 2715 Hillegass Avenue in 1905. It is not known why the Martins moved to Berkeley. The usual reason was so that the children could attend the University, but neither Scott nor Maude appear to have attended.

In 1911, Harry Martin bought Lot 24 in Block A of Elmwood Park. In 1915, he built a shop building next to the completed Dondero Building of 1912-13. Most of the early investors in what was becoming the neighborhood shopping street lived nearby, but for Mr. Martin, he was investing also in his future and that of his son. The H. M. Martin Company opened in the northernmost shop of the completed building in 1915. Twice (in 1916 and 1921) the building was expanded to the south to create space for

more shops. The 1921 expansion gave the Martin Company a new home. This was to be the conveniently located place of business for Mr. Martin for the rest of his life.

The Martins were well-enough known in town that the celebration of their 65th wedding anniversary was captured by the *Berkeley Gazette* in story and picture in 1946. Sadly, Jennie died in early 1948, and Scott died soon after. Harry Martin continued to run the business until early 1949. He died the following year. Daughter Maude received revenue from the building until her death in about 1969. In 1970, the Martin Building was purchased by Queene and Frank C. Libby, Jr., owners of the McCullough Building next door and of College Avenue Electric in that building.

The Martin Building was only the second commercial building at this end of the district. There was a grocery store in the building at least from 1921 when a store room was built behind 2907 College for the use of the grocery store run by Joseph Gelber. Beginning in 1923, James S. Hay ran the Ideal Groceteria in the space. He in turn sold the business to Roderick D. Goode in 1925. Goode was a neighbor, living at 2813 Stuart Street. In the early 1930s, Bernard W.

White opened the long-running Topside Market. In 1935, Mr. Martin expanded the store space for the market by removing the partition between 2905 and 2907 and creating a single, centered entrance. The Topside lasted about twenty years, closing in 1952 with a storewide sale. The next owners were George Farray & Son. Mr. Farray had come to this country from Aleppo, Syria, and owned a small grocery store at 3024 Ashby Avenue between Domingo and Claremont Avenue. Mr. Farray died in October 1953 and the business gave way to the New

Claremont Market, which remained open until about 1970, ending the history of grocery stores in this location. Soon after, Albert Braver, who had owned a popular shop on Bancroft across from the Student Union selling records and tobacco, opened, with his wife, Magnum Opus, an imported wicker basket emporium in the space. After about twenty years, AG Ferrari's Ultra Lucca moved into the space and remained for twenty-seven years. The Italian Homemade Company delicatessen is currently in this large space.

16. Significance.

The Martin Building is significant as a contributing building in the Elmwood Commercial District. Its one-story height and its traditional shopfronts (even with the transoms covered) are entirely compatible with most of the buildings in the district.

The building is also significant for being one of the buildings constructed during the pre-war phase of development (1907–1916).

Lastly, the Martin Building is significant for the continuity of its businesses over the years. A grocery store has been an important part of the

business history of the building. After a hiatus between 1970 and 1990, food-oriented businesses have continued to use the large double space.

The Martin Building's eponymous business, the H. M. Martin Company, a successful real estate company, was in the building from 1915 to 1949. These were, and are, the types of businesses that made the Elmwood commercial district so successful as a self-contained "Main Street" through the years.

Features to Preserve.

- the traditional shopfronts
- the transom windows

17. Historic Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

Architectural Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: No

18. Is the property endangered? No

19. Bibliography.

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 4301, 5 January 1915; as well as several alteration applications.

Block books and Sanborn maps

City directories.

Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.

Ormsby Donogh Real Estate File (1939–1977), BAHA.

Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.

Berkeley Tourist and Business Survey, 1924.

ancestry.com

“Strong Exchange of Berkeley Men,” *Oakland Enquirer*, 13 October 1906

Deeds, *Berkeley Gazette*, 16 May 1911.

Contract notice, *Oakland Tribune*, 17 January 1915.

“H. M. Martins Celebrate Their 65th Wedding Day” by Edna Strachan, *Berkeley Daily Gazette*, 7 November 1946.

“Albert Elijah Braver” *SFGATE*, 7 November 2003.

“AG Ferrari, a Fixture on College Avenue for 27 Years, has Closed” by Frances Dinkelspiel, *Berkeleyside*, 6 February 2017.

20. Recorder

Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird, 2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

4 October 2025

Additional Photos.

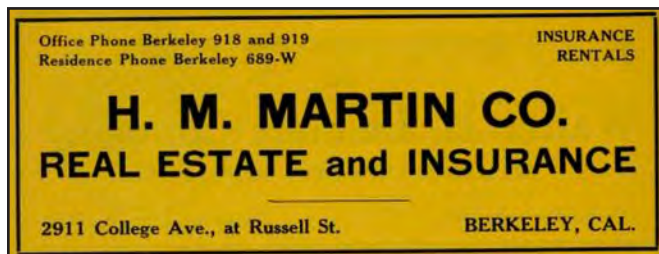


Scott Martin with Byron Bolfig inside the H. M. Martin Co. real estate office in 1947. Bolfig Collection, Berkeley Historical Society.



Jennie and Harry Martin in their home at 2715 Hillegass Avenue.

Gazette photo, *Berkeley Gazette*, 7 November 1946.



H. M. Martin Co. display ad in the 1922 Polk-Husted Oakland-Berkeley City Directory.

Additional Photographs.



*The Martin Building, 2905
College Avenue.*

Anthony Bruce, 2025.



*The Martin Building, 2905
College Avenue.*

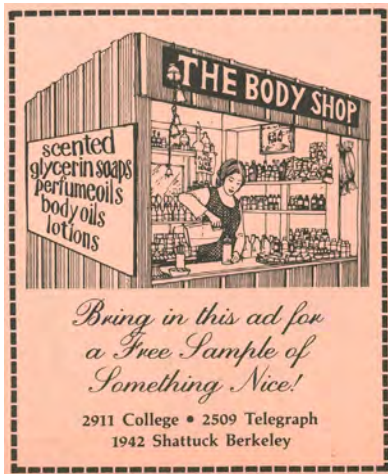
Anthony Bruce, 2025.



*The Martin Building, 2905
College Avenue. Magnum
Opus, 2905 College; Forget
Me Not, 2909 College; The
Body Shop, 2911 College.*

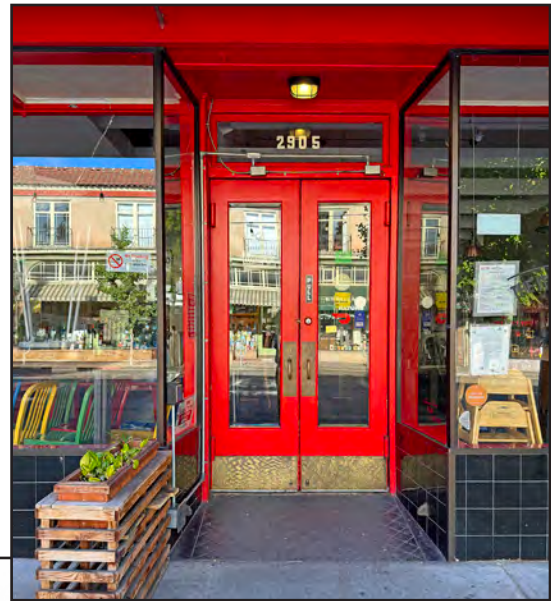
Anthony Bruce, 1982.

Additional Photographs.



Display ad for The Body Shop from a 1980 issue of The Berkeley Monthly.

The Martin Building, double-door entrance to 2905 College Avenue. This shopfront configuration dates from 1935. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



The Martin Building, 2905 College Avenue in 1968. Both the New Claremont Market and Northgate Radio had moved here from locations on Claremont Avenue.

Real estate listing ("owner retiring"), Donogh Real Estate File, BAHA.



Martin Building. Topside Market, 2907 College; unknown, 2909 College; H. M. Martin Co., 2911 College Avenue. Ormsby Donogh, 1939, Donogh Real Estate File, BAHA.

WRITE IN INK

APPLICATION FOR BUILDING PERMIT FRAME BUILDING

Application is hereby made to the Department of Buildings and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for permission to build a one story 3 room frame dwelling on the S. of College street 60 feet South of Russell street. Side 24 Block 9, Elwood Park. Tract

Being Lot No. 24 Block 9, Elwood Park. According to plans and Specifications herewith submitted. All provisions of the Building Law will be complied with in the erection of said building whether specified herein or not.

Estimated entire cost of Building \$ 3,800.00

Build to be occupied as Store by (No.) _____ families

Size of Lot 50 by 100 feet.

Size of proposed building 50 ft. by 60 ft. Extreme height of building 20 ft.

Height in clear of cellar _____ ft. _____ in. Height in clear of first story _____ ft. _____ in.

Height in clear of second story _____ ft. _____ in. Height in clear of third story _____ ft. _____ in.

Foundation to be of (material) _____ (Thickness) _____ inches, greatest height of foundation _____ inches.

Width of footings _____ inches.

Mail slots 3 X 6 Covered Other _____ X _____ inches _____ N _____ Post on _____ If piers are used, give size _____ by _____ ft. on centers.

Size of underpinning _____ X _____ inches _____ inches O. C. Size of studs in first story 3 X 4 inches 16 inches O. C.

Size of studs in second story _____ X _____ inches _____ inches O. C. Size of studs in third story _____ X _____ inches _____ inches O. C.

This building will be five feet from any other building.

Exterior wall covering to be of Plaster & stucco Light shaft with covering to be of _____

All outside walls covered with shingles or plaster will be close boarded.

First floor joists 2 X 12 inches 16 inches on centers. Longest span between supports 16 ft.

Second floor joists _____ X _____ inches _____ inches on centers. Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Third floor joists _____ X _____ inches _____ inches on centers. Longest span between supports _____ ft.

Ceiling joists 2 X 12 inches 16 inches on centers. Longest span between supports 16 ft.

Rafter 2 X 4 inches 24 inches on centers. Longest span between supports 12 ft.

Roof covered with Tar & gravel Steep or flat? flat. Pitch 3 + 12

Studs in bays or partitions will be same as outside walls of each story.

Chimney Plaster floor _____ lined with fire clay _____ any patent tiles?

(See grate flues to be patent chimney or brick?) _____

Any dumb waiters or chutes? _____ At y elevator (freight or passenger) _____

Cove brackets will be solid.

Name of Owner of Ground H. M. Martin Residence Address Berkeley

Name of Owner of Building _____ Residence Address _____

Name of Lessee of Building _____ Residence Address _____

Name of Architect or Designer _____ Residence Address _____

Name of Builder Lawl Kellner Residence Address 2753 Piedmont Ave.

We hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

2907-09 College Lawl Kellner
Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder.

Address 2753 Piedmont Ave.

NOTE: This Permit expires one year from date unless sooner revoked by the City Council.

Date JAN - 5 1915 Permit No. 4301

Check here Print _____ Seal Berkeley

JAN - 5 1915



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 31
Dondero Building
2901 College Avenue



The Dondero Building, 2901 College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Address:** 2901, 2901 1/2, 2903. 2903 1/2 College Avenue; 2706 Russell Street
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 052-1567-02401
(Elmwood Park Tract, Block A, Lot 23)
Dimensions: 60 feet x 120 feet
Cross Streets: Ashby Avenue and Russell Street
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 11876
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
a. Building(s): Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
b. Landscape or Open Space: No
c. Historic Site: No
d. District: Yes
e. Other: Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Dondero Building
Commonly Known Name: not known
6. **Date of Construction:** 1912-13 **Factual:** Yes
Source of Information: City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 2517,
12 December 1912
7. **Architect:** John Sullivan, 6452 Harmon Court, Oakland
8. **Builder:** F. Walter Thaxter, 2820 Kelsey Street
9. **Style:** Storefront
10. **Original Owners:** John Faust Dondero, 2838 Derby Street
Original Use: commercial (5 stores)
11. **Present Owner:** JCJ9 Property Management LLC
Present Occupant: Nabolom (2706 Russell); Five Little Monkeys (2901 College);
Methok Pema Antique Handcraft (2903 College); Tibetan Gem Shop; Methok
Pema Comfort Clothing (2903 1/2 College)
12. **Present Use:** commercial (4 stores)
Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** R-2
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Excellent **Interior:** unknown **Grounds:** Ø
Has the property's exterior been altered? Yes

14. Description.

Built in 1912–13, this is a one-story and basement wood-frame structure with cement plaster exterior. The Dondero Building has been stripped of its Prairie/Viennese Secession ornamentation of applied geometric shapes. Its present smooth façade is capped with a narrow cornice, and framed by slightly projecting piers.

The building is angled at the corner with a corner entrance to the store (5 Little Monkeys) at 2901 College. Transoms are gone from the corner store, but probably still exist at the three stores along College, hidden behind signage. The southernmost two storefronts have been reconfigured. The very small shopfront on College appears as it did in the 1939 photo. Imaginative painting of the exterior of the corner

store gives the illusion of arched windows.

Today there is one shopfront on the Russell Street frontage. Earlier photos show possibly as many as three. Fluted piers mark what had once been a separate shop, but it is now a part of the corner store. The shopfront at the far end is traditional with plate glass and a slightly recessed entrance but dates from 1937 alterations by architect Edwin Lewis Snyder for a post-office remodel. The alteration permit states, “Remodel storefront and remove ornaments from front of building.” The narrow transoms would date from this remodel.

A fantasy mural of toys and monkeys has been painted in a recessed panel on the Russell Street side of the corner store.

15. History.

In early December 1912, John Faust Dondero was having his newly purchased property at the corner of College and Russell cleared in preparation for construction of a commercial building that was to begin later that month. His real estate venture may have been the bright spot in a December that was especially hard on Dondero. He had been the chief complainant in charges against the running of the State Home for the Adult Blind on Telegraph Avenue in Oakland. His complaints led to an investigation, and, in December, a lengthy hearing before the State Board of Charities. John Dondero was the star witness, but his testimony was torn to shreds by the Board as being hearsay. He responded that his complaints rose from his continuing purpose of “solving the problems of the blind in California.”

Dondero was a lifelong advocate for the blind and the institutions that provided for them. He was Supervisor of Boys at the Deaf and Blind School in Berkeley, where he was one of the investigators into the conduct of director Douglas Keith, who was later removed by the Gov-

ernor. John Dondero was himself blind—since age 16—but he gave up his work at the school to enter the real estate business in 1912. At the December 1912 hearing, he said publicly that he was independently wealthy, owned property, was building in Berkeley, and engaged in a real estate office. His grandfather, Giovanni Dondero, arrived in San Francisco in 1860 and made his fortune in real estate. John may have been following in his footsteps. After the Martin Building was constructed next door, Dondero worked at the H. M. Martin Co. in the fire insurance division.

Backed by former Governor George Pardee, John Dondero ran—unsuccessfully—for the State Board of Equalization several times in the 1920s and 1930s, campaigning in small towns in his district.

John Dondero married Arlington “Arlie” McCormick in July 1913. Arlie was part of a pioneer Napa family living in St. Helena on Spring Mountain at the McCormick Ranch where she was born. She came to Berkeley on Thanksgiving in 1911 to join the faculty of the Deaf and

Blind school where she met John. While they were engaged, his new College Avenue building was put in her name. The Donderos lived at 2726 Garber Street, near College, in a house built for them to lease in 1915 by the owner of the land who lived next door. In December 1919, after an illness of three months, Arlie Dondero died at Merritt Hospital in Oakland. John Dondero married Edith Margaret Rogers in 1922. Their son was named John Arlington Dondero.

The Dondero Building had a major impact on its surroundings, both negative and positive. When the Dondero Building was built, it was the first commercial encroachment on the east side of College Avenue in the Elmwood Park tract, which had been assumed by homebuilders to be a residential tract. It was also the first commercial building at the north end of the two blocks of College between Webster and Russell. Prior to 1912, all businesses were on the west side of the street, clustered around Ashby Avenue (except for a tiny real estate office built at Russell in early 1912). Three houses stood on the east side of the street by 1912, two being very close to the Dondero Building. Its construction was an offensive shock to these two homeowners. Orville Root moved his house to Ashby Place in 1913. The Barbers, next door to the Roots to the south, waited until the McCullough Building was built next to their property before moving their house away. The Dondero Building had a negative impact on the neighborhood and was the first impact to later trigger Berkeley's first zoning decision. Conversely, the Dondero Building paved the way for commercial infill on the vacant lots on College between Ashby and Russell, helping to create today's beloved and thriving Elmwood commercial district.

The strategically positioned corner shop in the Dondero Building, with its angled façade and large windows, seems to have been sought after for grocery stores and restaurants during the first thirty-five years. The first business in that

space was a grocery store owned by Wilford Nichols and Sidney Chown. Nichols had operated a grocery previously at 2711 Russell Street between College and Cherry. (Harvey Haseltine, who had purchased the Kelsey Ranch from the Kelsey family years before, built his own grocery and real estate office next to his house on Russell in 1909; after a few years Nichols took over the store, which ceased to exist after the Dondero Building was completed.) When the Danbert and adjoining commercial building were built at Derby and College in 1915, Wilford Nichols opened the Derby Market at 2707 College, and Sidney Chown became the sole proprietor. Chown consolidated his business in his Broadway grocery store in 1923, and the first of many restaurants opened in the corner space: Helen Montgomery's Ye Old Homestead Cider Company, with a newly installed brick fireplace and a wood paneled dining room. Various eateries were in the space before it returned to being a grocery store in the 1940s: Millward's Market.

In 1948, the type of business changed to men's apparel. Curtis & Gray was at 2901 College for over twenty years. Every young man in the surrounding neighborhoods most likely was fitted for his first suit at Curtis & Gray.

The one store that remained the longest was Sweet Dreams. In 1971, Gary Gendel opened Sweet Dreams candy shop in the Dondero Building, but not in the corner space (which was in use at the time). At 2901 1/2 College is a very small shop. It is not known what it was at first, but after WWI, Hardin Asher Parke, a barber, opened his own shop in that space. His wife Belle worked next door at Ye Old Homestead. Parke died in 1929, but the space remained a barber shop. It had two chairs, and the chair in the window was fitted with a hobby horse head, which no small child looking in could resist. This was the spot that Gary Gendel first rented for his candy shop. It is said that he filled the barber pole with jelly beans. Within a few years, he had outfitted the large

corner store with Victorian-style shelves and counters, filled with large glass jars of colorful old-fashioned candy. The store also sold whimsical gifts, and, for a time, the back room was set up as an ice cream parlor. The store became a fixture in the Elmwood district, as did Gendel himself, who would be seen striding along the sidewalk, going from one of his three stores to the other. (He also owned Sweet Dreams toy store and Primavera gift shop). Gary Gendel closed the toy store in June 2023 and he died that August.

The history of the Dondero Building includes the fact that it was twice the location of the Elmwood Station of the United States Post Office. After many years at Rolla Fuller's drugstore in the Koerber Building as "Station 8," the local post office moved to the Dondero Building in 1927 and was renamed "Elmwood Station." In 1937, architect Edwin Lewis Snyder was commissioned by then-owner James Russell Selfridge to remodel the post office at 2706-08 Russell Street and to "remove ornaments from front of building," in order to make the space more appropriate for the Post Office. The result was a bland and sterile façade on the eastern half of the Russell Street side of the building. The Post Office moved into its own building at 2705 Webster Street in 1948 and the Russell Street space was again remodeled: for Nelson's Self-Service Laundry, which was a neighborhood fixture for more than twenty years.

16. Significance.

The Dondero Building is significant as an anchor building in the Elmwood commercial district. Although only one story, it was designed to take advantage of its corner lot. The façade of the building is faceted as it turns the corner, and the shop entrance faces the street corner directly, giving the Dondero Building a strong visual presence.

The Dondero Building is also significant for its builder, John Faust Dondero (1885–1963). Not

The second time the Elmwood Station appeared in the Dondero Building was in the early 1970s. A major remodel was planned for the Webster Street site and the post office needed a temporary location. All the golden oak cabinetry and counters were brought over and carefully fitted together. One would have thought that the Post Office had always been there. When the remodel and addition were finished on Webster, the handsome woodwork was not reinstalled; a 1970s interior with orange Formica greeted postal customers at Webster and College.

The present Nabolom Bakery in the post office space was created to counteract the threat of regionalism and duplication of services in the Elmwood commercial district. The City had enacted temporary regulations for the turnover of businesses in the Elmwood in 1975 to attempt to retain neighborhood-serving businesses. In 1976, a hair-cutting salon had applied for a then-empty space. Neighbors said there was greater need for a bakery, and a group, including merchants, found both a group of women wanting to start a bakery and a vacant shopfront at 2706 Russell. The bakery has been an extremely popular business since the day it opened in 1976 in what had been one half of Nelson's Laundry. When the laundry later closed, Nabolom expanded into that space. After many years, Nabolom closed, but no one would allow it to die. It reopened with new owners as Nabolom Bakery and Pizzeria.

only was he a local resident who was an early commercial investor in the Elmwood district and a College Avenue businessman, but he was also noteworthy for his lifelong regard for the betterment of the lives of blind people in California, which he manifested through his activism, writing, and working at the California School for the Deaf and Blind.

The Dondero Building is significant for the businesses that have enriched the lives of the

neighboring residents, as well as all Berkeley-ans. The businesses went from one of the first full-scale grocery stores in the Elmwood to the several restaurants to the Curtis & Gray haberdashery to Sweet Dreams (1971–2023), a store in living memory beloved to all. The building is significant also for being the longtime home of the Elmwood Station of the United States Post Office.

The Dondero Building also played a role in social issues affecting both the neighborhood and the City. Its construction in 1912–13 caused

consternation to those who had already built their home on the east side of College Avenue in the Elmwood Park tract, and was a catalyst for the City's eventual first zoning decision in 1916. The growing concern in the 1970s over losing neighborhood-serving businesses in the Elmwood, as well as business redundancy, led to a temporary City ordinance and eventual special zoning. The Dondero Building solved the immediate problem of lack of services by providing a space for a bakery, missing in the Elmwood since the last bakery closed in 1970.

Features to Preserve.

- the faceted corner (three wall planes)
- the former barber shop storefront, with its two steps, traditional door, and single, small display window
- the traditional shopfronts along Russell Street
- the five remaining original pilasters (two on College and three on Russell)
- the ledgerock bulkheads at 2903 and 2903 1/2 College
- any remaining transoms

17. Historic Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

Architectural Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: No

18. Is the property endangered? No

19. Bibliography.

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 2517, 12 December 1912; as well as several alteration applications.

Block books and Sanborn maps

City directories.

Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.

Ormsby Donogh Real Estate File (1939–1977), BAHA.

Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.

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“A Profile of the Elmwood: Trends and Counter-Trends in a Berkeley Neighborhood Commercial District” Joanna Callenbach, Geography 181 class paper, Spring 1978.

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Deeds, *Berkeley Gazette*, 25 November 1912.

Contract notice, *Berkeley Gazette*, 14 December 1912.

“Blind Home Probe Begins: Dondero Placed on Stand,” *Oakland Tribune*, 16 December 1912.

“Evidence is Continued in Blind Home Investigation: Many Witnesses Called to Stand in Probe of Dondero Charges,” *Oakland Tribune*, 17 December 1912.

“Blind Home Attack is Breaking Down: Witnesses Called by Complainants in Inquiry Testify for Defense,” *Oakland Tribune*, 19 December 1912.

“State Home Teacher Weds; Faints in the Clerk’s Office. Mr. and Mrs. John Faust Dondero, who were Married Last Night in Berkeley. Dondero is an Instructor at the State School for the Deaf and Blind,” *Oakland Tribune*, 20 July 1913.

“Former Resident Dies: Mrs. Arlington Dondero Passes Away,” *St. Helena Star*, 2 December 1919.

“Blind School Probe Promised,” *Oakland Tribune*, 15 September 1920.

“Blind Man Here to Boost Candidacy for State Office,” *Modesto News-Herald*, 12 August 1926.

“Sweet Dreams Owner Dies Shortly after Closing 50-year-old Elmwood Toy Store” by Joanne Furio, *Berkeleyside*, 15 September 2023.

Interview with Ava Earle Barber, conducted by Anthony Bruce, 1970s.

20. Recorder

Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird, 2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

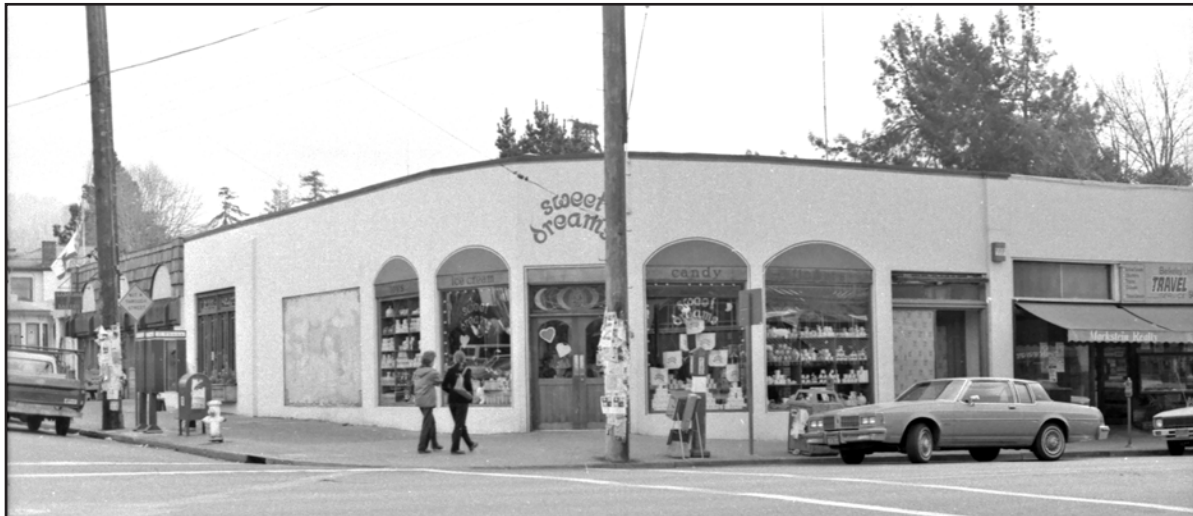
9 October 2025

Additional Photographs.



*Dondero Building,
College Avenue
frontage.
Anthony Bruce,
2025.*

*Dondero Building.
Anthony Bruce,
1982.*



*Dondero
Building,
College
Avenue
frontage.
Ormsby
Donogh,
1939,
Donogh
Real Estate
File, BAH.*

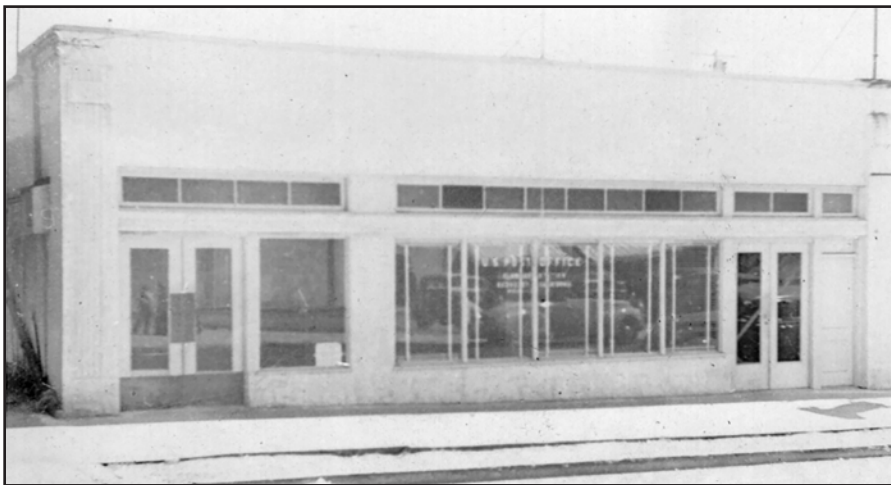
Additional Photographs.



Dondero Building, Russell Street frontage. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Dondero Building, Russell Street frontage, showing the toy store mural. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Dondero Building, Russell Street frontage, showing the Edwin Lewis Snyder-designed Post Office in about 1948.

Donogh Real Estate File, BAHA.



Dondero Building, Russell Street frontage, showing the now-missing center shopfront. Ormsby Donogh, 1939, Donogh Real Estate File, BAHA..

Additional Photographs.



Arle and John Dondero. Oakland Tribune, 7 July 1913.



John Faust Dondero at the house he built in 1923 after his second marriage. 66 Vicente Road.

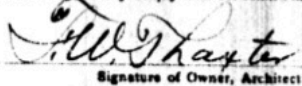
Fang family San Francisco Examiner photograph archive © The Regents of the University of California, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. This work is made available under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 license.



Mrs. Beretta in front of the Dondero Building. Byron Bolfig, 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.



Annie McKinney in McKinney Deli Food Shop, 2903-A College, Dondero Building. Byron Bolfig, 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.

APPLICATION FOR BUILDING PERMIT			
FRAME BUILDING			
Application is hereby made to the Department of Buildings and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for permission to build a <u>One</u> story <u>Seton</u> room frame <u>Building</u>			
corner	on the <u>SE</u> of <u>College</u> <u>Russell</u> street <u>60 feet on College + 110 feet on Russell</u> street		
Block	Being Lot No. <u>23</u> Block <u>A</u> <u>Chinwood Park</u> Tract		
According to plans and Specifications herewith submitted. All provisions of the Building Law will be complied with in the erection of this building whether specified herein or not.			
Estimated entire cost of Building \$ <u>5000.00</u>			
Building to be occupied as <u>Store</u>		by (No.) <u>Five</u> families	
Size of lot <u>60 ft</u> by <u>120</u> feet.			
Size of proposed building <u>60</u> ft. by <u>110</u> ft. Extreme height of building <u>Eighteen</u> ft.			
Height in clear of eaves <u>Seven</u> ft. in. Height in clear of first story <u>12 ft 14</u> ft. in.			
Height in clear of second story <u>—</u> ft. in. Height in clear of third story <u>—</u> ft. in.			
Foundation to be of (material) <u>Concrete</u> (Thickness) <u>13</u> inches, greatest height of foundation <u>7'0"</u> inches			
Width of footings <u>18</u> inches.			
Wall sills <u>2</u> x <u>6</u>		Main sills <u>Concrete wall</u> Girders <u>8</u> x <u>12</u> Post	
on piers <u>8</u> x <u>8</u>		If piers are used, give size <u>18" x 10"</u> by <u>12</u> ft. on centers.	
Size of underpinning <u>—</u> inches inches O.C. Size of studs in first story <u>2</u> x <u>6</u> inches <u>16</u> inches O.C.			
Size of studs in second story <u>—</u> inches inches O.C. Size of studs in third story <u>—</u> inches inches O.C.			
This building will be five feet from any other building.			
Exterior wall covering to be of <u>7/8 x 1/2 Plaster Board + Paper + Plaster Finish</u>			
All outside walls covered with shingles or plaster will be close boarded.			
First floor joists <u>2</u> x <u>12</u> inches <u>16</u> inches on centers. Longest span between supports <u>10</u> ft.			
Second floor joists <u>2</u> x <u>12</u> inches <u>16</u> inches on centers. Longest span between supports <u>12</u> ft.			
Third floor joists <u>—</u> x <u>—</u> inches <u>—</u> inches on centers. Longest span between supports <u>—</u> ft.			
Ceiling joists <u>2</u> x <u>12</u> inches <u>16</u> inches on centers. Longest span between supports <u>14</u> ft.			
Rafters <u>2</u> x <u>6</u> inches <u>16</u> inches on centers. Longest span between supports <u>12</u> ft.			
Roof covered with <u>3 Ply Gypsum</u> Sleep or flat? <u>Yes</u> Pitch <u>—</u>			
Roofs or bearing partitions will be same as outside walls of each story.			
Chimneys of <u>—</u> lined with <u>—</u> any patent flue?			
Gas grate flues to be patent chimney or brick? <u>Yes</u>			
Any dumb waiter or chutes? <u>—</u> Any elevator (freight or passenger) <u>—</u>			
Cove brackets will be solid.			
Name of Owner of Ground <u>John F. London</u>		Residence Address <u>Berkeley, Cal</u>	
Name of Owner of Building <u>—</u>		Residence Address <u>—</u>	
Name of Lessee of Building <u>—</u>		Residence Address <u>—</u>	
Name of Architect or Designer <u>A. Sullivan</u>		Residence Address <u>6452 Harmon Court Oakland</u>	
Name of Builder <u>H. W. Thayer</u>		Residence Address <u>2820 Kelsey St Berkeley</u>	
I hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any way accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.			
 Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder Address <u>2820 Kelsey St</u>			
This Permit expires one year from date unless sooner revoked by the City Council.			
Date	Permit No.		
<u>DEC 12 1912</u>	<u>2517</u>		
Berkeley Print  West Berkeley			



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 32
Safeway Supermarket Building
2887 College Avenue



The Safeway Supermarket Building, 2887 College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Address:** 2887 College Avenue
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 053-1696-01500
(University Villa Tract, Block A, Lots 1 and 2)
Dimensions: 120 feet x 120 feet
Cross Streets: Stuart Street and Russell Street
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 14442
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
a. Building(s): Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
b. Landscape or Open Space: Yes
c. Historic Site: No
d. District: Yes
e. Other: Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Safeway
Commonly Known Name: 7-Eleven
6. **Date of Construction:** 1932 **Factual:** Yes
Source of Information: City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 37037, 25 June 1932, and No. 110772846, 1972
7. **Architect:** Harold F. Genss, 2249 Ward Street (1932); Max R. Garcia, A.I.A. and Associates, 555 Sutter Street, San Francisco (1972)
8. **Builder:** K. E. Parker Company, 135 South Park, San Francisco (1932); Lambert & Wells, 315 Second Street, San Francisco (1972)
9. **Style:** industrial
10. **Original Owners:** K. E. Parker Company (land & building)
Original Use: commercial (1 store)
11. **Present Owner:** Miottell Ward J Jr Trustee
Present Occupant: vacant; 7-Eleven; Arlene's Cleaners; Elmwood Laundry
12. **Present Use:** commercial (4 stores)
Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** R-2, R-2A
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: fine **Interior:** unknown **Grounds:** fine
Has the property's exterior been altered? Yes

14. Description.

Built in 1932, the Safeway Building is one story and is constructed of reinforced concrete. The reinforced concrete piers project slightly from the building's walls and extend above the parapet where they exhibit minimal Art Deco styling. There are eight piers from front to back, creating seven bays.

The building was designed to house a modern supermarket with a large stock room behind the market space. The adjoining parking lot was a necessary adjunct for a supermarket. The entrance to the store was on College Avenue. The four piers that frame the front façade were surfaced in celadon green glazed terra cotta in an angular Art Deco style. The same glazed terra cotta framed the three-panel frieze above the transom windows. The first two bays on the south side also held display windows and transoms. The transom windows were each divided in the style of Roman lattice.

Safeway vacated the building in late 1970 and the building was subsequently remodeled. Four shops were installed in place of the one super-

market. One shopfront is at the north end of the street façade, with the south two thirds left a blank wall. Along the south wall, the three other shops open to a concrete walkway next to the parking lot. The third bay is filled in, and the others contain store entrances or display windows. Each open bay has a plain marquee above the shopfronts. The upper half of each of the seven bays is surfaced with diagonally placed redwood boards, which introduce the rustic Sea Ranch style to this concrete industrial-like building. Three of the redwood panels have large plastic store signs attached. A vine covers much of the street façade and much of the first two side bays. The north side of the building, built on the property line, has no openings.

The parking lot has a concrete curb around it and two driveway entrances: one on College and one on Russell. A kiosk, designed to hold a small shop, was later built at the southwest corner of the parking lot. It is now vacant.

15. History.

In 1909, a church building was erected at the northeast corner of College and Russell for the College Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church. Architect Clinton Briggs Ripley (1849–1922) designed a picturesque stucco building with half-timbering, towers, gables, and a large stained-glass window facing College. Ripley's practice was in Honolulu, but he happened to be here at the time his services were needed. In 1928, the large structure at Durant and Dana was built for Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church. When the church opened, the College Avenue congregation moved to the new church and the College Avenue site became surplus property (which by then was two lots facing College Avenue).

The City Council, in May 1932, reclassified the

two lots as commercial—per petition by Trinity Church—and the property was immediately sold in order to finance the construction of Trinity Hall next to Trinity Church.

The new owner of the land was the K. E. Parker Company of San Francisco. This major contracting firm was also the builder of the new supermarket built on the site, which was leased to Safeway Stores. The site of the church became a parking lot for the store. The building was designed by Berkeley architect Harold F. Genss (1890–1983).

The name “Safeway” appeared in 1926 as the new name for several grocery store chains that merged that year. The College Avenue store was constructed during the last year of the company's rapid expansion, when the effects

of the Depression were felt.

When the building was completed, Safeway did not move into it. Instead, the building opened as a Piggly Wiggly supermarket. Piggly Wiggly opened in 1916 in Memphis, Tennessee, as the first self-service grocery store. It was extremely successful and influenced grocery stores around the country to convert to self-service. After a stock market fiasco, the company was divided and sold to regional chains. Safeway acquired the West Coast Piggly Wiggly in 1929. In 1933, there were two Piggly Wiggly stores in the relatively small Elmwood business district, and one Safeway (at 2997 College). By 1939, Safeway had moved into the building at 2887 College Avenue, and the red-and-yellow Safeway signs had gone up on the building and in the parking lot.

In 1959, Safeway introduced a new supermarket design created by the architectural firm of Wurster, Bernardi & Emmons. The first one built was the Marina Safeway in San Francisco. Soon older Safeway buildings were being replaced by these much larger buildings with a signature curved roof and glass front. Of the two Safeways on College Avenue, the one just over the line in Oakland near Claremont Avenue was chosen for the modern makeover. The Safeway at Russell, still owned by the K. E. Parker Company, remained the same. In 1966, the property was sold to Robert W. and Evelyn Ratcliff, he being the architect son of Walter H. Ratcliff, Jr.

By 1970, with two more years left on their lease, Safeway ceased operations in the building that August. The building was put up for sale. Almost right away both 7-Eleven and a laundromat were interested in leasing space. Two years later, the property was finally sold in August 1972 to Berkeleyans John and Katrina Miottel. A permit was taken out that fall to “remodel old Safeway store to shopping complex,” with plans by architect Max R. Garcia.

In a 1976 letter written to the City Council, Mr.

Miottel described his thinking around the project: “During my ownership of the property, I have acted to improve it for the benefit of the neighborhood. Prior to my acquisition of the property in 1972, the improvements consisted of an abandoned Safeway market and adjoining parking area. The improvements had been subjected to substantial vandalism, and numerous and repeated health code violations had been issued for accumulation of trash and debris.

“After several months of careful planning, a total renovation of the property was undertaken at a cost of hundreds of thousands of dollars. Although the site is zoned C-1 and could have been improved with buildings in its entirety, in the interests of the neighborhood it was decided to preserve the parking lot for the convenience of shoppers and local residents. In addition, utilities were placed underground, public benches were placed around the site, and a bulletin board kiosk was provided for public use. The area was landscaped and the buildings on the site are of an attractive resawn redwood, concrete, and rough brick style. I believe that my actions have amply demonstrated my concern for the Elmwood area.”

The first businesses to move into the completed building in the summer of 1973 were the present 7-Eleven food store; Korakleen coin-operated laundry (site of the present Elmwood Laundry); One of a Kind, a bookstore, facing College Avenue; and possibly a fourth shop: Fotique. In Fotique’s then-empty space Berigan’s Records opened in 1975, located where Arlene’s Cleaners is now. In 1976 almost a year after One of a Kind closed, Alexander Pope Haircutters moved in (working business name: Rape of the Locks), but not without a contentious neighborhood fight and City hearings regarding possible duplication of services. Korakleen did not last long; it was soon replaced by Coin-op Super Wash; and later by LaundraLand. Berigan’s moved to a new location and Fotoshop moved in.

In 1976, a small Fotomat building was proposed for the southwest corner of the parking lot. The question of whether it was considered a drive-in or walk-in business seems to have doomed this project as a free-standing “kiosk” business. Instead, in 1978, Fotomat moved into

16. Significance.

The Safeway building is significant for expanding the Elmwood commercial district out of its original two-block boundaries. The building was constructed four years after the last parcel had been built on (the Sparhawk Building of 1928).

It is also significant as the first non-traditional shop building in the Elmwood. Built as a large, single-use building (a modern supermarket), the Safeway building came with its own dedicated parking lot.

The building has significance after its 1972 remodeling for introducing the concept of the

the former Berigan’s Records space, later replaced by of the Dryclean Club of America.

The small building that stands at the corner of the parking lot, and that is currently vacant, was built in 1979. It was designed and fabricated by the firm of Bluepeter, Inc. of San Francisco for Earrings, Ltd., a jewelry shop.

strip mall to the Elmwood. Shops in a row with a walkway along the front, and the whole facing a parking lot are features that define a strip mall. Wikipedia states that these small malls are generally service-oriented, containing a hair salon, grocery store, dry cleaner, and laundromat, for instance.

Finally, the building and parking lot are significant for their association with the early growth years of major chain, Safeway.

Features to Preserve.

- the remaining bit of Art Deco styling at the tops of the piers
- the prefabricated kiosk shop
- the panels of resawn redwood
- the rough gray bricks (or simulated bricks) that cover some areas of the walls

17. Historic Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

Architectural Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

19. Bibliography.

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 37037, 25 June 1932; City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 110772846, November 1972; as well as several other applications for alterations.

Block books and Sanborn maps

Directories.

Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.

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Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.

“A Profile of the Elmwood: Trends and Counter-Trends in a Berkeley Neighborhood Commercial District” Joanna Callenbach, Geography 181 class paper, Spring 1978.

Property file for 2887 College Avenue, City of Berkeley.

Various Elmwood directory folders, published between 1974 and 2002.

ancestry.com

Wikipedia.

The Berkeley Monthly.

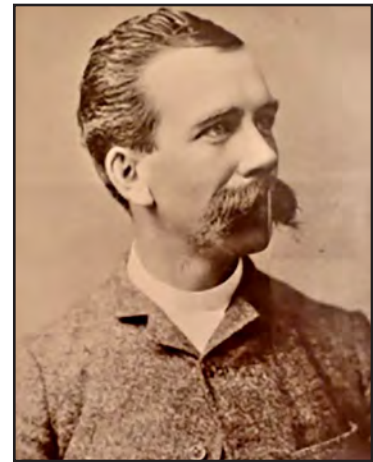
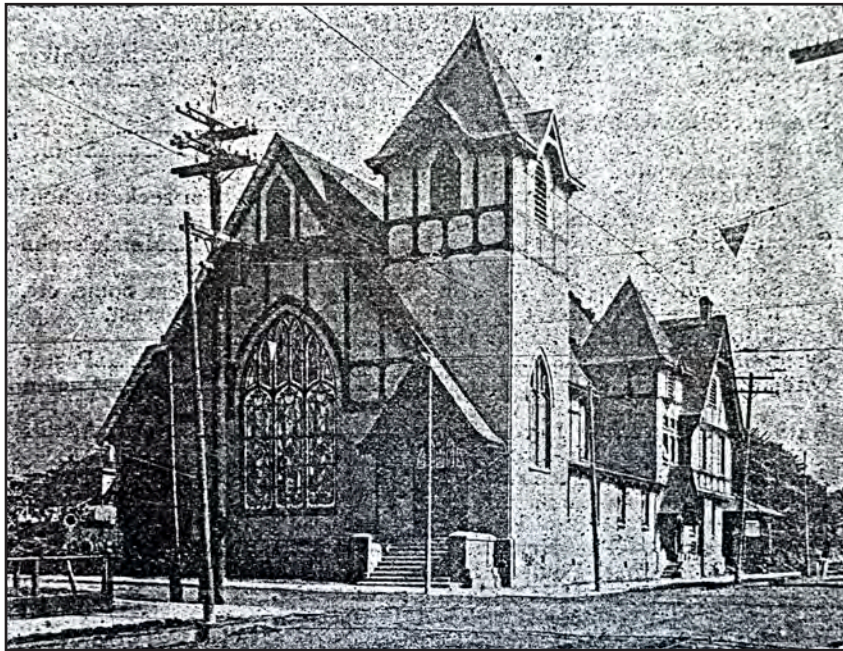
“C. B. Ripley, Pioneer Honolulu Architect, Dies in California,” *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, 13 February 1922.

20. Recorder

Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird, 2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

20 January 2026

Additional Photographs.



Architect C. B. Ripley (above).
Found on-line.



College Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church. The current parking lot was created where this building stood. The Safeway Building was built on the garden area at the left of the church.
Source unknown.

Postcard of a rendering of the soon-to-be-built College Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church.
Source unknown.

Additional Photographs.

The Safeway Building, parking lot façade.

Anthony Bruce, 2025.



The Safeway Building, two views of the kiosk in the parking lot, designed and fabricated by Bluepeter, Inc. in 1979. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



The Safeway Building, showing the value of the parking lot's "open space" to give a clear view of Dwight Way Hill from the Elmwood commercial district. Byron Bolfig, November 1947, Berkeley Historical Society.

Additional Photographs.



The Safeway Building, parking lot façade, showing the seven bays. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



The Safeway Building, showing parking lot driveway exit onto Russell Street. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



The Safeway Building and parking lot; view looking northwest to College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

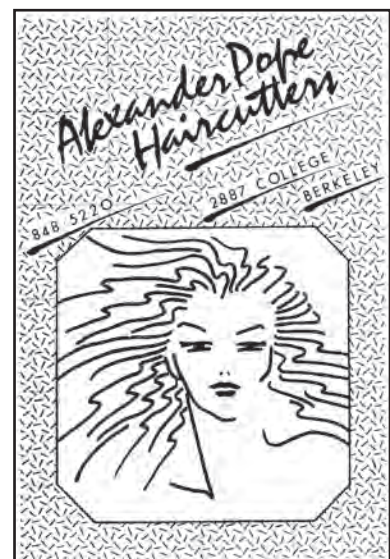
Additional Photographs.



The Safeway Building in the summer of 1970, just before the store closed. Donogh Real Estate File, BAHA.



Safeway street façade along College Avenue. Ormsby Donogh, 1939, Donogh Real Estate File, BAHA.



Advertisements for Alexander Pope Haircutters, Berigan's Records, and 7-Eleven from the Berkeley Monthly, late 1970s and early 1980s.

Application for Building Permit

CLASS A-B AND C BUILDINGS

Application is hereby made to the Department of Buildings and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for permission to build a 1 story 2 room class C building.

on the NE corner of College Ave. and Russell Streets street.

Being Lot No. _____ Block _____ Trust _____

According to plans and Specifications herewith submitted. All provisions of the Building Law will be complied with in the erection of said building whether specified herein or not.

Estimated entire cost of building \$ 18,000 Extreme height of building 22 ft.

Size of Lot 120° by 120° feet. Size of proposed building 60° ft. by 120° ft.

Building to be occupied as Store by (Name) _____

	WALLS			PIERS OR COLUMNS		JOISTS		GIRDERS			
	HEIGHT	MATERIAL	THICKNESS in. ft.	MATERIAL	SIZE	MATERIAL	SIZE	SPACING	MATERIAL	SIZE	SPACING
Footings											
Foundations											
Basement											
1st Story											
2nd Story											
3rd Story											
4th Story											
5th Story											
6th Story											
7th Story											
8th Story											

See Plans & Specifications

Concrete &

Light shaft wall covering to be of _____

Roof covered with Asph. & Flt. Pitch as needed

Chimneys of _____ lined with _____ any patent flues? _____

Gas grate flues to be patent chimney or brick? _____

Any dumb waiters or chutes? _____ Any elevator (freight or passenger)? _____

Cover brackets will be solid.

Name of Owner of Ground K. E. Parker Co. Res. Address 195 South Park, S. F.

Name of Owner of Building _____ Res. Address _____

Name of Lessee of Building Safeway Stores Res. Address 454 Jackson Oakland

Name of Architect or Designer H. F. Gertz Bus. Address 2249 Ward St. Berkeley

Name of _____ Bus. Address _____

We hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

(SCL 9991) Pg. 180
F2 I
H-666 (Ad. 1731)

K. E. Parker Co. by [Signature]
Signature of Owner, Architect or Designer.

Address 135 South Park
San Francisco

2887 College Ave.

This Permit expires one year from date unless sooner revoked by the City Council.

Date JUN 25 1932 Permit No. 37037



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 33
David Building & Hussey House
2832 College Avenue



The David Building at 2832 College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Address:** 2832, 2836 College Avenue
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 053-1695-01100
(Berry-Bangs Tract, Block J, Lot 9)
Dimensions: 40 feet x 108 feet
Cross Streets: Stuart Street and Russell Street
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 14414
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
a. Building(s): Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
b. Landscape or Open Space: Yes
c. Historic Site: No
d. District: Yes
e. Other: Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Hussey House; David Building
Commonly Known Name: not known
6. **Date of Construction:** 1915; 1972 **Factual:** Yes
Source of Information: City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 5004, 27 October, 1915; City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 070672652, 5 July 1972
7. **Architect:** Charles M. Norgrove; W. B. Baker & Ronald Dean Senna of Senna Kemp & Kemp Design Partnership
8. **Builder:** Cedarborg & Anderson, 1033 Poplar Street, Oakland; David & Company
9. **Style:** Prairie; Early California Adobe storefront
10. **Original Owners:** Dr. Samuel W. Hussey, 2649 Russell Street; Thomas S. & Janet David
Original Use: residential and office; offices and commercial (2 stores)
11. **Present Owner:** Ludwig Alison F Tr
Present Occupant: offices; Vibrant Nails & Lashes
12. **Present Use:** offices; commercial (1 store)
Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** R-2A
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Excellent **Interior:** unknown **Grounds:** unknown
Has the property's exterior been altered? Minimally

14. Description.

Built in 1972, this wood-frame shop building (built in the front yard of an existing house) is one story with mezzanine. The façade is surfaced with simulated adobe bricks painted white (slump stone). The trim is rough wood, stained dark brown.

15. History.

There was much building activity at the north edge of the Elmwood commercial district in the early 1970s—even crossing over Russell to the 2800 block of College Avenue. The first new shop building since the Gallardo Building of 1950 was built in 1972 at 2832 College. How was space found for a new building in an already built-up neighborhood? It was built in the front yard of the Hussey House.

In 1904, Major Samuel William Hussey married Elizabeth Lillian Lugg. Samuel was a dental surgeon who had served in the Spanish-American War (and later served in World War I). Lillian had come to this country from Cornwall, England, with her family as a teenager. Her father was a bookkeeper and the family lived at 1239 Haskell Street. The young couple first lived on Haskell when they settled in Berkeley in 1909. In 1912 Dr. Hussey was appointed to a position at the University and they moved to one of the apartments in the Koerber Building. Two years later they moved into a large house at the northwest corner of Russell and College. They must have liked the neighborhood, as they bought a lot to the north of where they were living and in 1915 built a two-story house and dental office at 2832 College Avenue designed by Charles M. Norgrove, a Berkeley draftsman. The Husseys enjoyed their College Avenue home, although not as much when John Bischoff purchased the corner house, moved it west, and built an apartment house on the corner, lot-line to lot-line in 1920. Mrs. Hussey died in 1941 and Dr. Hussey sold the house the next year. He died in Napa in

The house—behind the store—was built in 1915 in a vaguely Prairie style. It is stucco, high-waisted, and with a shallow hip roof. The windows are casements with Prairie-inspired muntin design.

1958. Meanwhile, the Hussey House had been converted to a duplex after the World War II.

In 1971, Thomas Swafford David and his wife Janet Sullivan David purchased the property. This was the first of three residential properties that the Davids bought in the early 1970s with an eye to converting them to commercial uses. Thomas David was a 1963 graduate of the University.

In April 1972, the Davids applied to the City to convert the Hussey House to offices and to build a free-standing commercial shop building in the front yard. They turned to architect Ronald Senna of the firm of Senna Kemp & Kemp Design Partnership, who was working on a shops-and-offices complex in North Berkeley—Walnut Square—to design their project.

The shops building was designed to resemble a rustic California adobe. The slump stone used on the street façade can easily pass for adobe bricks, and the trim was rough unpainted wood.

The interior was divided into two shops, with the northern shop being much larger than the other. The first business to open in the larger space was Primavera, a very popular gift shop owned by Patsy Slater and Lynn Mattei. The interior, as designed by the architect, was also rough unpainted wood. The ceiling was open with exposed rafters. At the south wall of the space, a stairway led up to a narrow balcony-like mezzanine that ran around the whole interior. Both the ground floor and the mezzanine were used for merchandise, with the effect that shopping at Primavera was more like go-

ing on a treasure hunt. In 1978, the partnership was dissolved so that Lyn Mattei could be sole proprietor of their spin-off business, Primavera Too in the Davids' building next door on the corner. Patsy Slater had opened a new retail shop in the Koerber Building in 1977 and in 1979 sold Primavera to Gary Gendel, owner of Sweet Dreams, who ran it ably and successfully for many more years.

The other original tenant was the well-known Nature Company.

After completing the two large projects on the site, the Davids again commissioned Ronald Senna to remodel the garage at the back of the property which Dr. Hussey had built in 1917. The Davids had a very active two years. They purchased a pair of 1920s apartment buildings where the City parking lot is now at 2642 Russell Street. Their plan was to create more shops and offices. Their third project in the same vein was the Bischoff apartment building at 2840 College Avenue, next door to their initial investment. In 1973, they received the go-ahead from the City and began converting it to second floor offices and an intriguing jumble of retail spaces on different levels on the first floor. They had also purchased a home for themselves and their family: the Mission Revival masterpiece

at the corner of Russell and Kelsey.

Somehow, sadly, even with the shops at 2832 College being rented immediately, the Davids' projects to extend the Elmwood commercial district both northward and westward ran into problems. During 1974 they lost all their properties to foreclosure. They held onto 2832 College and their house on Russell Street to the bitter end, but by the end of 1974 all was gone. They left Berkeley and moved to Monterey where Thomas David went on to become a successful developer. The Davids left a legacy in Berkeley with a collection of unusual and inviting retail spaces in the Elmwood district.

The Hussey House had two surprising Berkeley connections over the years. In 1931, while the Husseys were in residence, Berkeley poet Charles Keeler (and first client of architect Bernard Maybeck in 1895) held a series of lectures on "Immortality" at the house. Keeler was also the founder of the Berkeley Cosmic Society.

In the summer of 1974, after the house had been made into offices, the *Berkeley Gazette* responded to an inquiry about the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Committee of Urban Care. (soon to be the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association). The reader was instructed to write to the committee at 2832 College Avenue.

16. Significance.

The David Building is significant as a newer building in the Elmwood commercial district. It is part of a development that had a big impact on the district, by extending offices and retail on the west side of College beyond the traditional boundary of Russell Street. It parallels the earlier extension of the Elmwood commercial district on the east side of the street: the former Safeway supermarket and parking lot.

The David Building is significant as a single shop building designed by Ronald Senna. Rather than individual buildings, the architect is known for the type of small, urban mall-like developments that became popular after the

success of Ghirardelli Square. Senna designed a number of such projects for Rue-Elle Enterprises on the southside. He is best known for the iconic Walnut Square at Vine and Walnut in North Berkeley.

The David Building is also significant as the founding location of The Nature Company, which evolved into a nationwide chain

Features to Preserve.

- the slump stone façade
- the rough stained wood trim
- the rough stained wood doors

17. Historic Value— Neighborhood: Yes City: No

Architectural Value— Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

18. Is the property endangered? No

19. Bibliography.

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 5004, 27 October, 1915; City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 070672652, 5 July 1972; as well as several other applications for alterations.

Block books and Sanborn maps

Directories.

Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.

Ormsby Donogh Real Estate File (1939–1977), BAHA.

Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.

“A Profile of the Elmwood: Trends and Counter-Trends in a Berkeley Neighborhood Commercial District” Joanna Callenbach, Geography 181 class paper, Spring 1978.

Property file for 2832 College Avenue, City of Berkeley.

ancestry.com

Wikipedia.

“Appointments at University,” *Oakland Enquirer*, 11 April 1912.

“Dr. S. W. Hussey Given Commission in Army,” *Oakland Enquirer*, 28 May 1918.

“Veterans of Two Wars to be Honored,” *Oakland Tribune*, 30 October 1919.

“Immortality to be Topic of Lectures,” *Oakland Tribune*, 26 September 1931.

“Funeral Tomorrow for Mrs. Hussey,” *Oakland Tribune*, 31 January 1941.

“Thomas David to Take Bride,” *San Francisco Examiner*, 2 January 1967.

“2832 College—small store front of residence,” *Berkeley Gazette*, 10 April 1972.

“Walnut Square: ‘Problem was to Build a Friendly Shopping Center’ by Mark Trautwein, *Berkeley Gazette*, 2 May 1973.

“Construction Delays Worrying Trustees of Berkeley Library” by Bill Stetson, *Berkeley Gazette*, 14 July 1974.

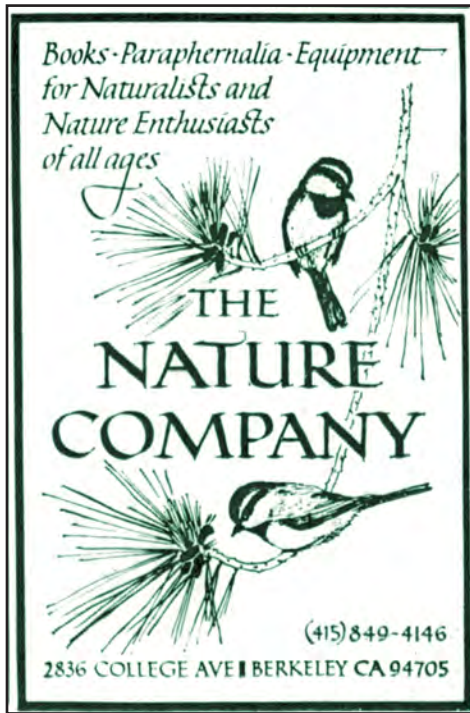
“A Village Within a City,” *San Francisco Examiner*, 21 May 1989.

20. Recorder

Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird, 2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

16 November 2025

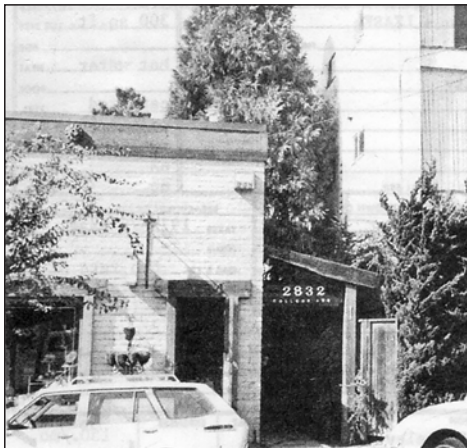
Additional Photographs.



An advertisement for The Nature Company. Berkeley Gazette, 6 April 1973.



The David Building, looking south to Russell Street. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



The Hussey House. at 2832 College Avenue Ormsby Donogh, 1939, Donogh Real Estate File, BAHA.

A real estate picture from 1975 showing the shop building at the left and a 1957 Values Inc. apartment building at the right. In between is the gate leading back to the Hussey House.

Donogh Real Estate File, BAHA.



Additional Photographs.



Earliest known photo of the David Building at 2832 College Avenue, tucked between the 1920 Bischoff apartment building and a 1957 Values Inc. apartment building, probably 1973. The slump stone façade is natural and the trim has not been stained dark. BAH Archive..



*Thomas Swafford
David, Janet Sullivan
David. Found on-line.*



*Elizabeth Lillian Lugg
Hussey, Dr. Samuel
William Hussey. Found
on-line.*



Primavera logo, 1973.

APPLICATION FOR BUILDING PERMIT

FRAME BUILDING

Application is hereby made to the Department of Buildings and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for permission to build a 2 story 1 room frame business and dwelling on the west side of bridge are 53 feet north of Russell St. street.

Being Lot No. _____ Block _____ Tract _____

According to plans and Specifications herewith submitted. All provisions of the Building Law will be complied with in the erection of said building whether specified herein or not.

Estimated entire cost of Building \$ 4400

Building to be occupied as business and dwelling by (No.) 1 families

Size of Lot 40 by 108 feet.

Size of proposed building 27 ft. by 59 ft. Extreme height of building 26 ft.

Height in clear of cellar 8 ft. — in. Height in clear of first story 9 ft. — in.

Height in clear of second story 8 ft. 6 in. Height in clear of third story _____ ft. _____ in.

Foundation to be of (material) concrete (Thickness) 12 inches, greatest height of foundation 4-6 inches.

Width of footings 12 inches.

Main sills 2 X 6 Main sills 4 X 6 Girders 4 X 6 Post

on piers X If piers are used, give size _____ by _____ ft. on centers.

Size of underpinning 2 X 6 inches 16 inches O. C. Size of studs in first story 2 X 4 inches 16 inches O. C.

Size of studs in second story 2 X 4 inches 16 inches O. C. Size of studs in third story _____ inches _____ inches O. C.

Exterior wall covering to be of sheeting and plaster Light shaft wall covering to be of _____

All outside walls covered with singles or plaster will be close boarded.

First floor joists 2 X 10 inches 16 inches on centers Longest span between supports 13 ft.

Second floor joists 2 X 10 inches 16 inches on centers Longest span between supports 10 ft.

Third floor joists _____ inches _____ inches on centers Longest span between supports 12 ft.

Ceiling joists 2 X 4 inches 16 inches on centers Longest span between supports 10 ft.

Rafters 2 X 4 inches 16 inches on centers Longest span between supports 10 ft.

Roof covered with sheeting tar & gravel Steep or flat? _____ Pitch _____

Studs in bearing partitions will be same as outside walls of each story.

Chimneys of brick lined with terra cotta any patent flues? three

Gas grate flues to be patent chimney or brick?

Any dumb waiters or chutes? _____ Any elevator (freight or passenger)? _____

Cove brackets will be solid.

Name of Owner of Ground Dr. S. W. Hussey Residence Address corner of Russell & College ave

Name of Owner of Building Dr. S. W. Hussey Residence Address _____

Name of Lessee of Building _____ Residence Address _____

Name of Architect or Designer C. M. Maguire Residence Address _____

Name of Builder Eulerborg & Anderson Residence Address 1033 Poplar St.

I hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

Eulerborg & Anderson
Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder.

Address 1033 Poplar St.

This Permit expires one year from date unless sooner revoked by the City Council.

Date OCT 27 1915

Permit No. 5004

BUILDING - ZONING PERMIT APPLICATION		CITY OF BERKELEY INSPECTION SERVICES DEPT.		FILE COPY
IDENTIFICATION NUMBER <u>070672652</u> USE <u>COMM</u>		USE ZONE <u>C-2</u>		
JOB ADDRESS <u>2832 COLLEGE</u> BLDG. AREA _____		LOT AREA _____		
BUILDING-PLAN REVIEW		SIGNS		
NEW _____ ADDITION ☒ REPAIR _____ ALTER _____ MOVE _____ DEMOLITION _____ REROOFING _____ EXCAVAT. _____ PLAN REVIEW ONLY: _____ DESCRIPTION OF WORK <u>FRAME & SLUMP STONE RETAIL BUILDING</u> CONSTRUCTION LENDER NAME _____ ADDRESS _____ FIRE ZONE 1. _____ 2. <u>(2)</u> 3. _____ OCCUPANCY GROUP A B C D E <u>(F)</u> G H I J 1 2 3 4 5 TYPE OF CONSTRUCTION (W.F.) I II <u>(MASONRY)</u> III-1-HR III-H.T. III-N. IV-1-HR IV-N. V-1-HR <u>(V-N)</u> BUILDING HEIGHT: <u>18'-0"</u> STORIES: <u>ONE</u> FEET <u>18'-2</u> VALUATION \$ <u>120,000</u>		BUILDING OWNER: _____ ADDRESS _____ TELE. _____ STREET FRONTAGE 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ BUILDING SIZE LENGTH: _____ HEIGHT: _____ AREA: _____ LENGTH _____ WIDTH _____ AREA _____ TYPE: _____ VALUATION \$ _____ OWNER <u>MR THOMAS S. DAVIS</u> TELE. <u>841-5970</u> ADDRESS <u>2832 COLLEGE AVE. BERK. CALIF.</u> CONTRACTOR _____ TELE. _____ ADDRESS _____ STATE LIC. <u>W.B. BAKER ROSENNA</u> CITY LIC. _____ DESIGNER <u>S.H.K. DESIGN PARTNERSHIP</u> TELE. <u>549-0742</u> ADDRESS <u>936 UNIV. AVE BERK CALIF</u> STATE LIC. <u>RDP 1263 CE 13127</u> CITY LIC. <u>S 2938</u>		
ZONING		WE/I HEREBY AGREE TO SAVE, INDEMNIFY AND KEEP HARMLESS THE CITY OF BERKELEY AND/OR ITS EMPLOYEES, AGAINST ALL LIABILITIES, JUDGMENTS, COSTS AND EXPENSES WHICH MAY IN ANY WISE ACCRUE AGAINST SAID CITY IN CONSEQUENCE OF THE GRANTING OF THIS PERMIT. ALL OF THE ABOVE SPECIFIED WORK CAN BE LEGALLY DONE AND WILL BE PERFORMED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF BERKELEY AND ALL OTHER LAWS APPLICABLE THERETO. SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT: <u>[Signature]</u> FEES BUILDING <u>97.00</u> PLAN REVIEW <u>60.00</u> ZONING _____ SIGN _____ TOTAL _____ ISSUED BY: <u>Kid</u> DATE <u>7/5/72</u>		
PERMIT FOR: _____				
DWELLING UNITS: EXISTING: _____ PROPOSED: _____ YARD CLEARANCES > FRONT DEPTH _____ LEFT WIDTH _____ REAR DEPTH _____ RIGHT WIDTH _____ LOT COVERAGE _____ % BUILDING HEIGHT _____ STORIES _____ FEET _____ PARKING: NO. OF SPACES _____ SIZE _____ X _____ DRIVEWAY _____ WIDTH _____ LENGTH _____ OFF-STREET LOADING: _____ OTHER REQUIREMENTS: _____ U.P./VARIANCE: _____ ①L				

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 070672652, 5 July 1972



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division

CITY OF BERKELEY
Ordinance #4694 N.S.
LANDMARK APPLICATION

Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Property No. 34
Bischoff Apartment Building
2838–40 College Avenue



The Bischoff Apartment Building, 2838 College Avenue. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

1. **Street Address:** 2838, 2840, 2842 College Avenue
County: Alameda **City:** Berkeley **ZIP:** 94705
2. **Assessor's Parcel Number:** 053-1695-01202
(Berry-Bangs Tract, Block J, portion of Lots 9 and 10)
Dimensions: 54 feet x 60 feet
Cross Streets: Ashby Avenue and Russell Street
3. **Is property on the State Historic Resource Inventory?** No
Is property on the Berkeley Urban Conservation Survey? Yes
Form #: 14416
4. **Application for Landmark Includes:**
a. Building(s): Yes **Garden:** No **Other Feature(s):** No
b. Landscape or Open Space: No
c. Historic Site: No
d. District: Yes
e. Other: Entire property
5. **Historic Names:** Bischoff Apartment Building
Commonly Known Name: not known
6. **Date of Construction:** 1920; 1972-74 (remodel) **Factual:** Yes
Source of Information: City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 2840, 6 July 1920; City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 121172413, 8 December 1972
7. **Architect:** John A. Bischoff (designer); Senna Kemp & Kemp Design Partnership
8. **Builder:** John A. Bischoff; David & Co.
9. **Style:** Simplified Classical Revival; 1970s "Pop" style
10. **Original Owners:** John A. Bischoff, 2717 Russell Street; Thomas and Janet David
Original Use: residential; stores and offices
11. **Present Owner:** Durst Mose & Esther O Trs
Present Occupant: Slash; Koraa; Slash
12. **Present Use:** commercial (3 stores and offices)
Current Zoning: C-E **Adjacent Property Zoning:** R-2A, C-E
13. **Present Condition of Property:**
Exterior: Excellent **Interior:** unknown **Grounds:** Ø
Has the property's exterior been altered? Yes

14. Description.

The Bischoff apartment building is a two-story, wood-frame structure built in 1920. It is surfaced in cement plaster painted light green. The building as it looks today is the result of a major remodel and conversion to an office and retail complex in 1972–73.

The ground floor was given the appearance of an arcade with six elongated arched windows on the College Avenue façade and two facing Russell. The second-floor windows were changed from double-hung sash to unobtrusive aluminum sliders. Three shops were created, each at a slightly different level. The large corner space, boasting five of the arches, is entered up only two steps from street level, but feels much higher from the interior looking out.

The central space (on College) is entered through the original grand apartment-house entrance. Two short flights angle up to shop level. This intriguing space is lit by two of the tall arched windows. The eighth arch is close to the north edge of the College Avenue façade, and is slightly taller and wider than the others. It is the entrance to the second-floor offices and opens onto a brightly-lit lobby with open steel and concrete stairway.

The third shop is at the southwest corner of the building with its entrance on Russell Street. This space was originally storage space for the apartment building. It is partially subterranean; a very short flight of stairs leads down from the sidewalk. There is a sturdy wooden rail fence at sidewalk level, safely guarding the stair well.

There remain two architectural features of the original 1920 design. The parapet gently curves at each corner to create an extra bit of height. There are three “balustrades” across the front elevation and one centered on the Russell street side. These are made of half-balusters attached to an inset panel to give the impression of a full, three-dimensional balustrade. These were retained in the remodel.

The other preserved feature is the grand entrance, set into the center of the College Avenue façade. Two freestanding, unornamented columns support a large arch that breaks into the second floor area. Above the shop entrance is a robust balcony with a railing of true balusters supported by two molded Classical brackets. Leading onto the balcony is a set of small-paned French doors that, when closed, form an arch.

15. History.

John Albert Bischoff was a perceptive and successful designer-builder; and, at least in the Elmwood, a shrewd investor. He purchased Lots 1 through 6 in Block K of the Berry-Bangs Tract in 1921, which were all of the as-yet un-built-upon lots on the west side of College between Russell and Ashby. By the end of 1922, he had built four buildings—all different but related in design—that are an important contributor to the architectural aesthetic of the Elmwood commercial district.

John Bischoff was born in 1885 in San Francisco. He was already a contractor when he married Elna Irene Nelson of Berkeley. They

moved often between addresses in Oakland and Berkeley until 1919 when Bischoff built a residence for his family at 2717 Russell Street at the corner of Cherry Street, one short block from College Avenue. The Bischoffs raised their three sons here and remained in the house the rest of their lives. Their son Elmer became a renowned figural painter and art instructor at the University.

They had not lived in the house long, before Bischoff began to reshape the neighborhood. At the start of 1923, upon his purchase of the \$135,000 Granada Apartments on Alice Street, the *Oakland Tribune* wrote this about him, “Bi-

schoff for a number of years has been active in Claremont and the College Avenue district. He recently completed the construction of 16 stores on [College] and within the past year has built four apartment houses in this section. His other building operations in this district brings his total in this section to close to \$500,000.”

Bischoff’s first project in the district was the Bischoff apartment building at 2840 College. On the northwest corner of College and Russell stood the Edward Cooke House, designed by Walter H. Parker in 1909. This is the house that the Husseys lived in before building their house next door at 2832 College Avenue. In July of 1920, Bischoff moved the Cooke House as far west as possible on the deep lot. He then proceeded to build the two-story apartment building on the corner, with no set-back. This aspect continued the urban appearance of this intersection begun with the Methodist Episcopal Church on the northeast corner in 1909 and the Dondero Building on the southeast corner in 1912, but it caused great consternation to the Husseys, who protested to the City Council that “its obstructing the view would be a menace to the public.” The “urban intersection” was complete the next year, with construction by Bischoff of another two-story building at the southwest corner.

By 1921, the apartment building was completed. John Bischoff advertised the apartments as “Sunny 3 and 4-room apts.; wall beds, breakfast nook, oak floors, linoleum, gas range, instantaneous water heater.” The building stood demurely on the corner for the next fifty years. Then, when the construction boom in the north end of the Elmwood district began in the early 1970s, the apartment building was converted to commercial use.

Thomas Swafford David and his wife Janet Sullivan David, acting as David & Company, purchased the property from the Bischoff family, and applied to the City in 1972 to convert

the building to offices and shops. The Davids’ project next door at 2832 College was already underway. They used their architect Ronald Senna of the firm of Senna Kemp & Kemp Design Partnership, who was working the same year on a shops-and-offices complex in North Berkeley—Walnut Square, to design this project as well as the one next door. A building permit was issued in December 1972.

Architect Senna took a robust 1920s building and was able to create the “paper-thin” look that was popular at the time. The very narrow reveals of the minimalist aluminum windows and the eight elongated arches, as well as the way the many arches break up the walls, give the building a more light and airy appearance. The three shops (there is one facing Russell) are each set at a different level, adding the sense of discovery to the shopping experience that one might find in a place like Walnut Square. That the architect was able to create this dynamic in a four-square-walls structure was an exemplary feat.

One of the first shops was Gourmet Sandwich and Delicatessen owned by Henry Yarmo and Stephen Wally. They received a use permit in May 1973 and were allowed to open for business in February 1974 before the entire project was completed. The deli was located in the sunny corner space.

Another first business was La Plume de Ma Tante owned by Katherine Dunham. What type of business it was or where in the building it was located is not known as all businesses were given the same address.

Also a first was Oggi, opened by Lippincott and Reguzzoni in December 1973, which featured modern furniture and accessories. It was located in the center shop space, entered through the grand, columned apartment house entry and then up two short flights of stairs. Sadly, this promising business was for sale before the end of the year. It was replaced by Scaramouche, a women’s clothing store.

In 1977, Lynn Mattei, co-owner of Primavera next door in the David Building, opened Primavera Too, a clothing store in the center space. Then, in 1982 she applied for a use permit, through the Marcel Schurmann company, for a “fine paper goods” store: Papyrus Gallery. It was not readily accepted because of the new quota system prohibiting like businesses, and there were other stores that sold greeting cards. The owners prevailed, and for about twenty years this intimate inviting space was filled with people shopping for cards from the Marcel Schurmann line, which was the local manufacturer of the finest greeting cards at the time.

Beginning in early 1974, Thomas and Janet David began losing their Berkeley real estate through foreclosure, with nothing left by that December. According to Mr. David, “an exceptionally difficult money market” had prevented continued work on his Russell Street project nearby, jeopardizing his other projects. The Bischoff apartment building was purchased by lawyer Thomas F. Camp on August 18, 1974, who was able to finish the work on the building under the existing permits. It was sold to the current owners in January 1976.

16. Significance.

The Bischoff Apartment Building is significant firstly as one of the seven buildings that John A. Bischoff designed and built in the Elmwood (three commercial buildings, three apartment buildings, and one combination commercial and residential building). It is also the first building that he built during the two years he developed his properties. John Bischoff helped to shape the architectural style of the Elmwood Commercial District.

The building is also significant as a major residential-to-commercial conversion that, along

with the David Building next door built in 1972, helped to extend the boundaries of the west side of the commercial district north of Russell Street that year, in line with the Safe-way Building on the east side.

The building is significant as the work of architect Ron Senna, who was a designer of intriguing shopping areas such as Walnut Square. He managed to impart the same character onto a square building by creating shops set here and there at different levels.

Features to Preserve.

- the parapet with simulated balustrades
- the original entrance with columns, arch, balcony, and small-paned French doors
- the simplified second-floor windows
- the eight elongated arches from the 1972 remodel
- the three-level shop design

17. Historic Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: No

Architectural Value — Neighborhood: Yes City: Yes

18. Is the property endangered? No

19. Bibliography.

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 8936, 6 July 1920; City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 021172413, 8 December 1972; as well as several other applications for alterations.

Block books and Sanborn maps

Directories.

Urban Conservation Survey (block files), BAHA.

Ormsby Donogh Real Estate File (1939–1977), BAHA.

Tales of the Elmwood, Burl Willes, 2000.

“A Profile of the Elmwood: Trends and Counter-Trends in a Berkeley Neighborhood Commercial District” Joanna Callenbach, Geography 181 class paper, Spring 1978.

ancestry.com

Property file for 2840 College Avenue, City of Berkeley.

Various Elmwood directory folders, published between 1974 and 2002.

“Wedding to Be October Event,” *Oakland Tribune*, 8 October 1910.

“Engaged to Wed John A. Bischoff,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 13 October 1910.

“Berkeley Building Permits,” *San Francisco Bulletin*, 9 July 1920.

“Row Looms as Apartment is Built,” *Oakland Enquirer*, 18 August 1920.

Advertisement for apartments at 2840 College, *Oakland Tribune*, 4 January 1922.

“Big Apartment Sale in Lake District Made,” *Oakland Tribune*, 7 January 1923.

John Bischoff obituary, *Oakland Tribune*, 9 May 1964.

“Thomas David to Take Bride,” *San Francisco Examiner*, 2 January 1967.

“Report on Construction,” *Berkeley Gazette*, 25 December 1972.

“Walnut Square: ‘Problem was to Build a Friendly Shopping Center’ by Mark Trautwein, *Berkeley Gazette*, 2 May 1973.

Fictitious Business Name Statement: “La Plume de Ma Tante,” *Berkeley Gazette*, 19 October 1973.

Advertisement for Oggi, *Berkeley Gazette*, 11 June 1974.

“Construction Delays Worrying Trustees of Berkeley Library” by Bill Stetson, *Berkeley Gazette*, 14 July 1974.

Liquidation sale for Oggi, *Berkeley Gazette*, 8 October 1974.

“Recollections of John A. Bischoff, Jr.” by Andrea Gabriel, *Rockridge News*, April 1987.

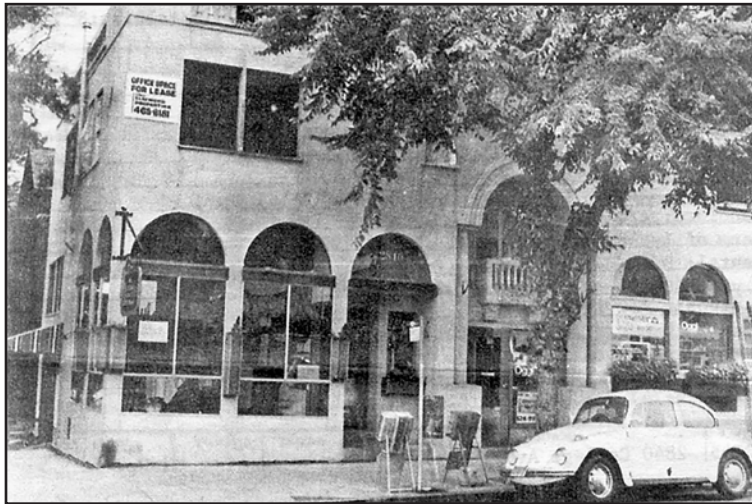
“A Village Within a City,” *San Francisco Examiner*, 21 May 1989.

20. Recorder

Anthony Bruce for Elmwood Property Owners Association, c/o Claudia Hunka, Your Basic Bird, 2940 College Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705

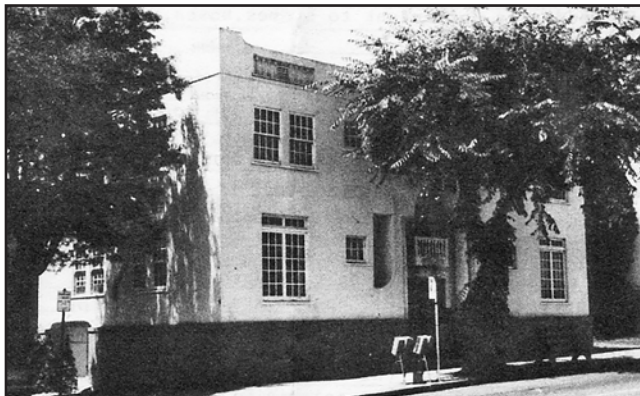
20 November 2025

Additional Photographs.



*The Bischoff apartment house,
Russell Street side.*

Anthony Bruce, 2025.



*The Bischoff apartment house, 1971.
Multiple Listing Form, Donogh
Real Estate File, BAHA.*



*Primavera Too. Jo-
anna Callenbach,
1978.*

Additional Photographs.



The Bischoff apartment house (on left) about 1972. BAHA archives.

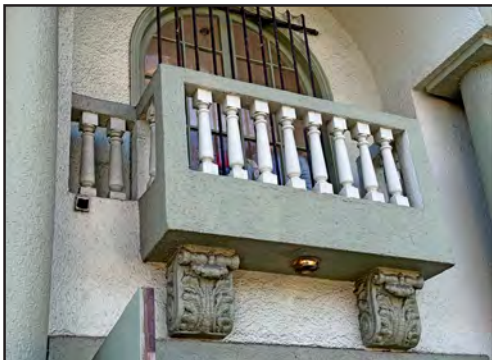


The Bischoff apartment house undergoing remodeling, 1973. BAHA archives.

Additional Photographs.



The Bischoff apartment house. Anthony Bruce, 2025.



*The Bischoff apartment house, balcony.
Anthony Bruce, 2025.*



*The Bischoff apartment house, entrance.
Anthony Bruce, 2025.*

The Bischoff apartment house, west and south elevations. Anthony Bruce, 2025.

Additional Photographs.



*John Albert Bischoff.
Oakland Tribune, 12 December 1928.*



Elna Louise Nelson who married John Bischoff in 1910. San Francisco Chronicle, 13 October 1910.



Advertisement for Scaramouche, which replaced Oggi in about 1974. Berkeley Monthly, 1976.

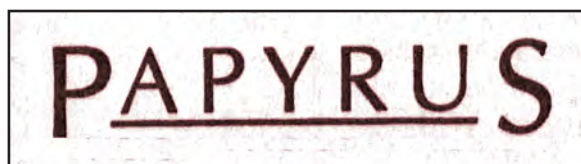


The Bischoff family home at 2717 Russell Street, designed by John A. Bischoff in 1919.

Photo: Anthony Bruce, 2025.



Developers of the building into commercial in 1972. Thomas Swafford David, Janet Sullivan David. Found on-line.



Advertisement for one of the first businesses, Oggi. Berkeley Gazette, 11 June 1974.

WRITE IN INK

Application for Building Permit

ALTERATION AND REPAIRS

Application is hereby made to the Department of Buildings and Inspections of the City of Berkeley for permission to

Build, Alter or Add to a 2 story 9 room frame dwelling

Located 2717 Central College - Russell

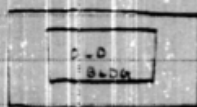
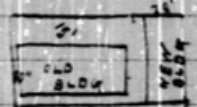
All provisions of the Building Law will be complied with in the erection, alteration or repairing of said building whether specified herein or not.

Value of improvements \$2500

Building to be occupied as apartment by (No.) 4 families families.

WRITE PLAINLY FULL DESCRIPTION OF WORK TO BE DONE

Alter inside of building & convert into 4-3 room apt. in strict accordance with the building laws.

no blue new stands and etc

all blue with set up the rooming

Name of Owner John B. Russell Residence Address 2717 Russell

Name of Builder John B. Russell Business Address 2717 Russell

I hereby agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the City of Berkeley against all liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any wise accrue against said City in consequence of the granting of this permit, or from the use or occupancy of any sidewalk, street or sub-sidewalk space by virtue thereof, and will in all things strictly comply with the conditions of this permit and Ordinances of the City of Berkeley.

I do solemnly swear that the above is a true and full statement of all work to be done and of the cost thereof.

#2609 Russell

John B. Russell
Signature of Owner, Architect or Builder.

Address 2717 Central St.

☒ This permit expires one year from date unless sooner revoked by the City Council.

Date JUL 6 1920 Permit No. 8935

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 8935, 6 July 1920,
showing how the existing house was to be moved west on the lot.

BUILDING - ZONING PERMIT APPLICATION		CITY OF BERKELEY INSPECTION SERVICES DEPT.		FILE COPY
IDENTIFICATION NUMBER <u>021172413</u>		USE <u>OFFICE</u>	USE ZONE <u>C-1</u>	
JOB ADDRESS <u>2832 COLLEGE AVE.</u>		BLDG. AREA	LOT AREA	
BUILDING-PLAN REVIEW		SIGNS		
NEW ☐ ADDITION ☐ REPAIR ☐ ALTER ☒ MOVE ☐ DEMOLITION ☐ REROOFING ☐ EXCAVAT. ☐ PLAN REVIEW ONLY:		BUILDING OWNER: ADDRESS _____ TELE. _____ STREET FRONTAGE 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ BUILDING SIZE: LENGTH: _____ HEIGHT: _____ AREA: _____ LENGTH: _____ WIDTH: _____ AREA: _____ TYPE: _____ VALUATION \$ _____		
DESCRIPTION OF WORK <u>CONVERT EXISTING APTS. INTO OFFICES PER</u> <u>PLAN AND SPECS. AND CHANGE OF</u> <u>OCCUPANCY REPORT DATED 8/25/72</u> CONSTRUCTION LENDER		OWNER <u>THOMAS S. DAVID</u> TELE. <u>841-5970</u> ADDRESS <u>2832 COLLEGE AVE.</u> CONTRACTOR <u>COWNER</u> TELE. _____ ADDRESS <u>SAME AS ABOVE</u> STATE LIC. _____ CITY LIC. _____ DESIGNER <u>SKK DESIGN PARTNERSHIP</u> TELE. <u>549-0742</u> ADDRESS <u>1936 UNIVERSITY AVE.</u> STATE LIC. <u>101263</u> CITY LIC. <u>52938</u>		
NAME _____ ADDRESS _____ FIRE ZONE 1. _____ 2. <u>(2)</u> 3. _____ OCCUPANCY GROUP A B C D E <u>(F)</u> G H I J 1 2 3 4 5				
TYPE OF CONSTRUCTION W.F. MASONRY CONCRETE STEEL I II III-1-HR III-H.T. III-N. IV-1-HR IV-N V-1-HR <u>(V-N)</u>				
BUILDING HEIGHT: _____ STORIES: _____ FEET _____ VALUATION \$ 12,000.00 <u>4,000.00</u>				
ZONING		WE/I HEREBY AGREE TO SAVE, INDEMNIFY AND KEEP HARMLESS THE CITY OF BERKELEY AND/OR ITS EMPLOYEES, AGAINST ALL LIABILITIES, JUDGMENTS, COSTS AND EXPENSES WHICH MAY IN ANY WISE ACCRUE AGAINST SAID CITY IN CONSEQUENCE OF THE GRANTING OF THIS PERMIT. ALL OF THE ABOVE SPECIFIED WORK CAN BE LEGALLY DONE AND WILL BE PERFORMED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF BERKELEY AND ALL OTHER LAWS APPLICABLE THERETO.		
PERMIT FOR: DWELLING UNITS: EXISTING: _____ PROPOSED: _____ YARD CLEARANCES: FRONT DEPTH _____ LEFT WIDTH _____ REAR DEPTH _____ RIGHT WIDTH _____ LOT COVERAGE _____ BUILDING HEIGHT _____ STORIES _____ FEET _____ PARKING: NO. OF SPACES _____ SIZE _____ X _____ DRIVEWAY WIDTH _____ LENGTH _____ OFF-STREET LOADING: _____ OTHER REQUIREMENTS: _____ U.P./VARIANCE: _____		SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT: <u>[Signature]</u> FOR: MR. DAVID FEES BUILDING 28 PLAN REVIEW 16.80 ZONING SIGN TOTAL 44.80 ISSUED BY: <u>[Signature]</u> DATE <u>12/5/72</u>		

City of Berkeley Application for Building Permit No. 021172413, 8 December 1972

