



# memorandum

date March 19, 2025

to Berkeley Landmarks Preservation Commission

cc David Pinck and Zack Kahn, Property Owners

from Johanna Kahn, Senior Architectural Historian, ESA

subject Supplement to City of Berkeley Landmark Application for 2035 Francisco Street, Berkeley

## Introduction

The owners of the residential building at 2035 Francisco Street in Berkeley, California, seek to have their property designated as a City of Berkeley Landmark or Structure of Merit. In 2024, the following documents were prepared to support a nomination for consideration by the City of Berkeley Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC):

1. *City of Berkeley Landmark Application for 2035 Francisco Avenue [sic]*, prepared by Jerri Holan and Associates, AIA, and dated September 9, 2024 (referred to herein as the landmark application);
2. City of Berkeley Staff Report to the LPC dated December 5, 2024, which presented a summary of the landmark application and staff's recommendations (referred to herein as the Berkeley staff report); and
3. *Supplemental Information for Landmark Application [for] 2035 Francisco Avenue [sic]*, prepared by Jerri Holan and Associates, AIA, and dated December 26, 2024 (referred to herein as the landmark application supplement or supplement).

Environmental Science Associates (ESA) was previously retained by the property owners to conduct a peer review of the landmark application and supplement for adequacy and completeness. ESA also reviewed the Berkeley staff report for a comprehensive review of the documentation submitted to the LPC to date. The goal of the March 3, 2025, peer review was to provide guidance on potential additional information or changes to the presentation that may better support a successful City of Berkeley Landmark or Structure of Merit application.

Following the findings of ESA's March 3, 2025, peer review, this memo is intended to clarify, illustrate, and substantiate the arguments in favor of City of Berkeley Landmark or Structure of Merit eligibility for 2035 Francisco Street. Presented below is a complete evaluation of the eligibility of 2035 Francisco Street under all City of Berkeley Landmark and Structure of Merit criteria.

## Preparer Qualifications

ESA Architectural Historian Johanna Kahn meets the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualification Standards for Architectural History, Architecture, and Historic Architecture. She holds a Master of Architectural History degree and a Certificate in Historic Preservation from the University of Virginia and a Bachelor of Architecture degree from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. She has 15 years of professional experience.

## Evaluation of Significance Under City of Berkeley Criteria

The City of Berkeley’s process for determining a property’s eligibility as a City of Berkeley Landmark or Structure of Merit is based on the significance criteria for the National Register of Historic Places and the California Register of Historical Resources.<sup>1</sup> The specific criteria for eligibility as a City of Berkeley Landmark and Structure of Merit are published in the Berkeley Municipal Code section 3.24.110 and reproduced below.<sup>2</sup> An assessment of the eligibility of 2035 Francisco Street under each criterion follows.

### Criteria for Landmark Designation<sup>3</sup>

#### 1. Architectural Merit

- a. **Property that is the first, last, only or most significant architectural property of its type in the region.**

2035 Francisco Street was constructed in 1906–07 as a multiple-family residential building that originally contained two flats.<sup>4</sup> It was neither the first nor the last of this property type to be constructed in Berkeley or the East Bay region. Research conducted as part of the landmark application does not indicate that the building surpasses other local properties of its type in terms of architectural significance. Therefore, it is not eligible as a landmark under this criterion.

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<sup>1</sup> “Nominate a Property for Landmark Status,” City of Berkeley, March 14, 2025, <https://berkeleyca.gov/construction-development/land-use-development/nominate-property-landmark-status>.

<sup>2</sup> While integrity is a required component of determining eligibility for listing on the National Register and/or California Register, the concept of integrity is excluded through omission from Berkeley Municipal Code, 3.24.110.

<sup>3</sup> The criteria for City of Berkeley Landmark designation are the same for City of Berkeley Historic District designation. 2035 Francisco Street is not evaluated as a potential historic district.

<sup>4</sup> For clarity and consistency, the nominated building should be referred to by its current address only. The minutes from the December 5, 2024, LPC hearing identify the subject building by its historic address (i.e., 2033–2035 Francisco Street) and not by its current address (i.e., 2035 Francisco Street). The landmark application and supplement variously identify the subject building as 2035 Francisco Street (correct) and 2035 Francisco Avenue (incorrect). The subject building is also assigned various names in the three documents reviewed. The landmark application identifies the “commonly known name” of the subject building as the “Underwood Flats.” The Berkeley staff report calls it the “Byron E. Underwood House,” and this is misleading because Underwood never lived in the subject building which contained two residential units until 1999 when they were combined and the current address assigned. The landmark application supplement identifies it as the “Underwood House,” but this usage is confusing because the report discusses it in the context of “Underwood’s three-building residential estate,” and Underwood’s private residence is no longer extant.

**b. Properties that are prototypes of or outstanding examples of periods, styles, architectural movements or construction, or examples of the more notable works of [sic] the best surviving work in a region of an architect, designer or master builder.**

2035 Francisco Street is an example of the Colonial Revival style of architecture that was popular across the United States from 1880 to 1955 and is ubiquitous in many Berkeley neighborhoods.<sup>5</sup> In the East Bay region, common subtypes of the Colonial Revival style included the Classic Box (ca. 1890–1910);<sup>6,7</sup> the Eastern Shingle Cottage (ca. 1895–1910),<sup>8</sup> which shares many similarities with the High-Peaked House (ca. 1895–1915);<sup>9</sup> and the Neoclassic Rowhouse (ca. 1895–1915).<sup>10</sup> 2035 Francisco Street embodies characteristics of multiple Colonial Revival subtypes and is a true hybrid. The building is essentially a Neoclassic Rowhouse (**Figure 1**) with a second story added between the raised first story and the hip roof with bracketed eaves and a front-facing gable. The building’s boxy, two-story massing is reminiscent of the Classic Box (**Figure 2**), and the shingle cladding on the second floor is borrowed from the Eastern Shingle Cottage (**Figure 3**). Based on a desktop survey completed by ESA staff, the second-story angled bay window on the primary façade is an uncommon feature among contemporary two-story Colonial Revival-style residential buildings in the vicinity. Because the architectural design of 2035 Francisco Street represents a fusion of several Colonial Revival subtypes but does not exemplify any one subtype, it would not be considered a prototype of a period, style, architectural movement, or construction technique. However, the building clearly illustrates the inventiveness and variation that could be achieved by architects of the time, and for this reason it should be considered an outstanding example of the Colonial Revival style in Berkeley during the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Therefore, 2035 Francisco Street is eligible as a landmark under this criterion.



**Figure 1.** Neoclassic Rowhouse.  
Source: *Rehab Right* (1980), 19.



**Figure 2.** Classic Box.  
Source: *Rehab Right* (1980), 16.



**Figure 3.** Eastern Shingle Cottage.  
Source: *Rehab Right* (1980), 20.

<sup>5</sup> Virginia McAlester and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998), 321 – 341.

<sup>6</sup> Oakland City Planning Department, *Rehab Right: How to Rehabilitate Your Oakland House Without Sacrificing Architectural Assets* (Oakland, CA: City of Oakland, 1980), 17–19, accessed March 10, 2025, <https://cao-94612.s3.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/documents/oak039424.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> In March 2025, ESA staff contacted Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association (BAHA) to inquire whether *Rehab Right*, which is specific to Oakland and is nearly 50 years old, is a generally accepted reference document for discussions regarding the historic preservation of properties in Berkeley in 2025. Both Anthony Bruce (executive director) and Fran Cappalletti (archivist) provided assurances that it is indeed commonly referenced and recommended by BAHA to customers with properties in Berkeley. Anthony Bruce (BAHA) and Fran Cappalletti (BAHA), emails to Johanna Kahn (ESA), March 6 and 7, 2025.

<sup>8</sup> Oakland City Planning Department, *Rehab Right*, 20.

<sup>9</sup> Mark A. Wilson, *A Living Legacy: Historic Architecture of the East Bay* (San Francisco, CA: Lexikos, 1987), 39.

<sup>10</sup> Oakland City Planning Department, *Rehab Right*, 19–20.

Attribution in the landmark application and Berkeley staff report of the original design of 2035 Francisco Street to prominent local architect A.H. Broad is conjectural.<sup>11</sup> While there are building permits documenting Broad’s 1927 design for the detached garage and unspecified alterations to the flats building amounting to \$1,800 (approximately \$32,000 in 2025),<sup>12</sup> no documentation has been identified to date that credits Broad with the original ca. 1906–07 design of 2035 Francisco Street. For comparison, the following buildings are among Broad’s notable works in Berkeley, and each has been designated as either a City of Berkeley Landmark or a Structure of Merit:

- Haste Street Annex of McKinley School at 2407 Dana Street (1906);
- Rev. Dr. Robert Bentley House at 2683 Le Conte Avenue (1900);
- George Edwards House at 2530 Dwight Way (1886);
- Alphonso H. Broad House and Storefronts at 2115–2119 Kittredge Street (1894);
- Brower Houses and David Brower Redwood at 2232–2234 Haste Street (1887);
- Capitol Market Building at 1500 Shattuck Avenue (1891);
- Fish-Clark House at 1545 Dwight Way (1883); and
- A.H. and Julia Broad House and Broad Apartment Building at 2030–2032 Bancroft Way (1887 and 1915).<sup>13</sup>

Based on the information available, is it unlikely that 2035 Francisco Street would qualify as an example of the more notable works or the best surviving work in a region of an architect, designer, or master builder.

**c. Architectural examples worth preserving for the exceptional values they add as part of the neighborhood fabric.**

As demonstrated under Landmark Criterion 1b above, 2035 Francisco Street is an outstanding example of the Colonial Revival style in Berkeley during the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Among the contemporary buildings in the neighborhood, 2035 Francisco Street is largely intact and exceptionally well maintained. In addition to beautifying the neighborhood, it contributes

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<sup>11</sup> Landmark application, 12; Berkeley staff report, 7–8.

<sup>12</sup> City of Berkeley, Building permit no. 29328, November 10, 1927, provided to ESA by the current property owners. The permit references “carpenter work, plumbing, wiring, plastering, painting, cement work, [and] hardware,” but there is no indication of the extent or location(s) of the permitted work. There is simply not enough information to claim that this work constituted an “extensive remodel,” as characterized in the landmark application.

<sup>13</sup> “Berkeley Landmarks,” Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association, accessed March 19, 2025, [https://berkeleyheritage.com/berkeley\\_landmarks/all\\_landmarks.html](https://berkeleyheritage.com/berkeley_landmarks/all_landmarks.html).

significantly to retaining the neighborhood's historic character. Therefore, 2035 Francisco Street is eligible as a landmark under this criterion.

**2. Cultural Value: Structures, sites and areas associated with the movement or evolution of religious, cultural, governmental, social and economic developments of the City.**

The Berkeley staff report and landmark application supplement attempt to establish the cultural value of 2035 Francisco Street in terms of its specific association with social and economic developments in Berkeley via the original owner, Byron E. Underwood.<sup>14</sup> Underwood was certainly an important historical figure in Berkeley during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, as documented in the landmark application and supplement. However, it does not necessarily follow that 2035 Francisco Street, which Underwood constructed as a rental property and which never served as his personal residence or business/civic office, is significantly and specifically “associated with governmental, social, cultural, and economic developments in Berkeley at the turn of the [20<sup>th</sup>] Century.”<sup>15</sup> These associations appear to be vague and tangential at best. It is more fitting to discuss Underwood's historical significance under the Historic Value criterion below.

A review of previously conducted archival research does not indicate that 2035 Francisco Street is associated with the movement or evolution of religious, governmental, social, or economic developments in Berkeley. Therefore, it is not eligible as a landmark under this criterion.

**3. Educational Value: Structures worth preserving for their usefulness as an educational force.**

A review of previously conducted archival research does not indicate that 2035 Francisco Street is associated with education in any capacity or that it should be considered an “educational force.” Therefore, it is not eligible as a landmark under this criterion.

**4. Historic Value: Preservation and enhancement of structures, sites and areas that embody and express the history of Berkeley/Alameda County/California/United States. History may be social, cultural, economic, political, religious or military.**

The Berkeley staff report and landmark application supplement ascribe historic value to 2035 Francisco Street largely in terms of its original architectural design as one of several residential flats buildings on the subject block. As stated in the supplement, “The flats are representative of multi-unit housing common in this neighborhood [...] at the turn of the Century.”<sup>16</sup> Perhaps a case could be made that this block of Francisco Street or even the larger neighborhood illustrates an early 20<sup>th</sup>-century residential development pattern. However, on its own, 2035 Francisco Street does not “[embody] multi-family development that emerged in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in the East Bay region that served an influx of residents who relocated following the 1906 earthquake.”<sup>17</sup>

As noted above, it is more fitting to discuss the potentially significant association of 2035 Francisco Street with the original owner, Byron E. Underwood, under the Historic Value criterion rather than the

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<sup>14</sup> Berkeley staff report, 8.

<sup>15</sup> Landmark application supplement, 3.

<sup>16</sup> Landmark application supplement, 3.

<sup>17</sup> Berkeley staff report, 9.

Cultural Value criterion. Because of his prominent roles in Berkeley's commerce and early government as well as California politics and social welfare, as documented in the landmark application and supplement, Underwood was an important personage during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The landmark application supplement asserts that each of Underwood's "many" investment properties in Berkeley, of which 2035 Francisco Street was one, "are representative of his role in the community [and] are significant as they were parts of his large business [as a real estate developer]." <sup>18</sup> However, this is a weak argument, and it would set a precarious precedent that any building constructed by any real estate developer could be found historically significant simply because of this initial association. The landmark application supplement also asserts that 2035 Francisco Street is historically significant as part of Underwood's estate that originally included three adjacent buildings on Francisco Street: Underwood's personal residence at 2041 Francisco Street (no longer extant), 2035 Francisco Street (extant), and the two-flat residential building at 2039 Francisco Street (extant). The two remaining buildings were built as rental properties, and neither served as Underwood's personal residence or business or civic office. Perhaps if Underwood's three-property estate were intact, an argument could be made that it, as a whole, convincingly illustrates the role and/or legacy of Underwood in the history of Berkeley. However, this is not the case, and 2035 Francisco Street does not appear to be significantly associated with Underwood.

For these reasons, 2035 Francisco Street is not eligible as a landmark under this criterion.

**5. Any property which is listed on the National Register described in Section 470A of Title 16 of the United States Code.**

2035 Francisco Street is not listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Therefore, it is not eligible as a landmark under this criterion.

## **Criteria for Structure of Merit Designation**

- 1. General criteria shall be architectural merit and/or cultural, educational, or historic interest or value. If upon assessment of a structure, the commission finds that the structure does not currently meet the criteria as set out for a landmark, but it is worthy of preservation as part of a neighborhood, a block or a street frontage, or as part of a group of buildings which includes landmarks, that structure may be designated a structure of merit.**

As demonstrated above, 2035 Francisco Street possesses architectural merit and is eligible as a City of Berkeley Landmark under Criteria 1b and 1c. In the event the LPC disagrees with this recommendation, it is the hope of the property owners that the LPC determines that the building is worthy of preservation as part of the neighborhood or block and designates it as a City of Berkeley Structure of Merit.

- 2. Specific criteria include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following:**

- a. The age of the structure is contemporary with (1) a designated landmark within its neighborhood, block, street frontage, or group of buildings, or (2) an historic period or event of significance to the City, or to the structure's neighborhood, block, street frontage, or group of buildings.**

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<sup>18</sup> Landmark application supplement, 3.

2035 Francisco Street is not contemporary with (i.e., constructed within five years of) the nearest designated landmarks identified in the Berkeley staff report or with any of the designated landmarks listed in Exhibit A of the landmark application supplement.<sup>19,20</sup> It is contemporary with the designated structures of merit listed in Exhibit A;<sup>21</sup> however, this criterion is specific to contemporaneity with designated landmarks and does not extend to designated structures of merit.

2035 Francisco Street is contemporary with several other buildings on the subject block as well as with a historic period of significance to the City of Berkeley, namely the building boom necessitated by the influx of displaced San Franciscans following the 1906 earthquake. Approximately 250,000 people were made homeless by the earthquake and subsequent fires; of these, it is estimated that 75,000 permanently left San Francisco to take up residence elsewhere.<sup>22</sup> To house the 15,000 or so refugees who relocated to Berkeley,<sup>23</sup> a flurry of construction resulted in new multiple-family apartment and flats buildings as well as single-family cottages and bungalows. Byron E. Underwood, the original owner of 2035 Francisco Street, was among the numerous property owners who responded to the demand for housing by building two two-flat buildings (i.e., 2035 and 2039 Francisco Street, both extant) ca. 1906–07 adjacent to his personal residence (i.e., 2041 Francisco Street, no longer extant). As such, 2035 Francisco Street is associated with the post-earthquake housing efforts in Berkeley, specifically, and the East Bay region, generally, an event that made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local and regional history. Therefore, 2035 Francisco Street is eligible as a structure of merit under this criterion.

**b. The structure is compatible in size, scale, style, materials or design with a designated landmark structure within its neighborhood, block, street frontage, or group of buildings.**

2035 Francisco Street is compatible in scale and/or materials with at least two of the nearest designated landmarks identified in the Berkeley staff report, i.e., the Whittemore/Woodworth House (1889) at 2043 Lincoln Street and the Loring House (1914) at 1730 Spruce Street. It shares some characteristics with the other designated landmarks and structures of merit identified in Exhibit A of the landmark application supplement, but these are not located within the same

<sup>19</sup> The nearest designated landmarks identified in the Berkeley staff report are the Whittier School (1939) at 1645 Milvia Street, Whittemore/Woodworth House (1889) at 2043 Lincoln Street, Las Casitas Apartments (1927–28) at 1619 Walnut Avenue, and Loring House (1914) at 1730 Spruce Street.

<sup>20</sup> The designated landmarks identified in the landmark application supplement are the A.H. and Julia Broad House (1887) and Broad Apartment Building (1915) at 2030–2032 Bancroft Way, Brower Houses (1887) at 2232–2234 Haste Street, Captain John Slater House (1894) at 1335 Shattuck Avenue, and Jennie C. Smith House (1897) at 2539 Benvenue Avenue.

<sup>21</sup> The designated structures of merit identified in the landmark application supplement are the Wurts-Lenfest House (1901) at 2523 Piedmont Avenue; Addison and Carrie Laflin House (1910) at 2119 Marin Avenue; Coplin Houses (1902) at 2503, 2509, and 2511 Regent Street; Mary J. Berg House (1901) at 2517 Regent Street; Harry H. Webb House (1904) at 2935 Otis Street; and Morrison House (1903–04) at 2532 Benvenue Avenue.

<sup>22</sup> “1906 Earthquake: Refugee Camps,” Presidio of San Francisco, National Park Service, accessed March 14, 2025, <https://www.nps.gov/prsf/learn/historyculture/1906-earthquake-relief-efforts-living-accommodations.htm>.

<sup>23</sup> Monique Beeler et al., “With San Francisco in Ruins, East Bay Opened Doors to Flood of Refugees,” East Bay Times, April 15, 2006, <https://www.eastbaytimes.com/2006/04/15/with-san-francisco-in-ruins-east-bay-opened-doors-to-flood-of-refugees/>.

neighborhood as the subject building, as required for eligibility as a structure of merit under this criterion.<sup>24-25</sup>

As noted above, 2035 Francisco Street is contemporary with several other buildings on the subject block. It is also compatible in size, scale, style, materials, and design with those buildings. While not in conformance with the letter of this criterion, the LPC may determine that 2035 Francisco Street, as one element of a largely contemporary and congruous neighborhood, is eligible as a structure of merit under this criterion.

**c. The structure is a good example of architectural design.**

2035 Francisco Street clearly illustrates the inventiveness and variation that could be achieved by architects working in the Colonial Revival style. It is a handsome building of pleasing proportions, and it is compatible in size, scale, style, materials, and design with other contemporary buildings on the subject block. 2035 Francisco Street embodies many of the defining characteristics of the Colonial Revival style, including:

- Raised foundation;
- Hip roof with bracketed eaves and central, street-facing dormer;
- Recessed entrance within a covered, raised, and partially enclosed porch;
- Classically inspired details including dentil molding and Corinthian columns;
- Broad, minimally projecting angled bay windows (as compared to more prominent angled bay windows seen on many Italianate-style buildings);
- Wood-sash windows;
- Wood doors;
- Variety of wood sidings (in this case rustic [basement level], shiplap [first story], and shingles [second story]); and
- Generally box-like (i.e., cuboid) massing.

2035 Francisco Street remains functional as a residential building and has been maintained in excellent physical condition. Known alterations that were sensitively executed to retain the historic character of the building include:

- Addition of a detached garage in 1927 (extant);
- Replacement of several wood-sash windows with compatible wood-sash windows (date not provided);

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<sup>24</sup> Landmark application supplement, 8–13.

<sup>25</sup> There are six mentions of “integrity” in the landmark application supplement. While integrity is a required component of determining eligibility for listing on the National Register and/or California Register, the concept of integrity is excluded through omission from Berkeley Municipal Code, 3.24.110. Therefore, the comparison of 2035 Francisco Street to other landmarks and structures of merit on the grounds that it “has much more integrity” and “has more integrity than all of them” (as stated on pages 4 and 5 of the landmark application supplement) is not germane to the discussion.

- Removal of the two original entry doors and replacement with one partially glazed, paneled wood door in 1999;
- In-kind replacement of the concrete steps leading to the covered entrance in 1999;
- Unspecified alterations to the breakfast nook in 2007;<sup>26</sup> and
- Roof monitor added sometime before 2000.<sup>27</sup>

In summary, 2035 Francisco Street is an objectively good example of a Colonial Revival-style building designed in the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Therefore, it is eligible as a structure of merit under this criterion.

**d. The structure has historical significance to the City and/or to the structure’s neighborhood, block, street frontage, or group of buildings.**

Research conducted as part of the landmark application does not indicate that 2035 Francisco Street is historically significant beyond its association with the broad patterns of local and regional history, as addressed under Structure of Merit Criterion 2a, above. Therefore, 2035 Francisco Street does not possess historical significance in the history of Berkeley or the immediate neighborhood, and it is not eligible as a structure of merit under this criterion.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the analysis above, ESA recommends that the LPC designate 2035 Francisco Street as a City of Berkeley Landmark for its architectural merit. Alternatively, ESA recommends that the LPC designate 2035 Francisco Street as a City of Berkeley Structure of Merit for its association with a historic period of significance to the City of Berkeley, namely the building boom necessitated by the influx of displaced San Franciscans following the 1906 earthquake; its compatibility with other historic buildings in the vicinity; and as a good example of the Colonial Revival style of architecture.

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<sup>26</sup> Berkeley staff report, 7; Landmark application, 3.

<sup>27</sup> Observation by ESA staff by comparing historic aerial photographs.

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