



**Historic Resources Board**

**Staff Report**

**Date:** March 5, 2008

**To:** Historic Resources Board

**From:** Clare Campbell  
Planner **Department: Planning and  
Community Environment**

**Subject:** 2300 Wellesley Avenue [08PLN-00016]: Request by Public Works Engineering, on behalf of the City of Palo Alto for Historic Resources Board review for the reclassification of the College Terrace Library from Category 4 on the City’s Historic Inventory to Category 2, as provided in Municipal Code Chapter 16.49. Environmental Assessment: Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act, per section 15331.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Historic Resources Board recommend to the City Council approval of the reclassification of the College Terrace Library as a Category 2 resource, based upon the findings that the project is consistent with the definition of Historic Category 2 (PAMC Section 16.49.020(b)).

**THE HISTORIC PROPERTY**

***The Architect and Builder***

Charles K. Sumner, the building architect, moved to Palo Alto in 1916 where he would design around 90 buildings between Palo Alto and the Stanford Campus. The architect’s stylistic repertoire included a range of Period Revival styles such as Spanish Colonial, Mediterranean and Tudor Revival. According to Dames & Moore, “Several of his designs showed the influence of the English Arts and Crafts architect C.F.A. Voysey [and] Birge Clark described Sumner as ‘a very sensitive’ architect.” Charles K. Sumner died in May of 1948, at age 74. His obituary states that he served a number of years on Palo Alto’s planning commission and “was actively interested in all civic planning related to the growth of Palo Alto as an ideal home community.”

George B. Moore, the building contractor, relocated to Mayfield, California in 1905 and came to play an active role in the development of the community. U.S. census records show that George B. and Bertha C. Moore were living on Stanford Avenue in Mayfield by 1910 with their children George Jr., Francis and Ross. By that time, George had established his career as a contractor; he was a member of the city council for a number of years and also served a term as mayor. Moore helped organize the early board of trade, which later became the Mayfield Chamber of Commerce. George B. Moore passed away in 1940. According to his obituary, Moore “was one of the most active contractors in the city, being responsible for the Mayfield Branch Library, the Bank of America Building, the Worth Building, both on California and El Camino Real, and the Granville Wood clinic building on the highway.”

### ***The Historic Building***

The College Terrace Library, built in 1936, is one of the five branch libraries operated by the City of Palo Alto. The building’s east wing is used as a library and the west wing is leased to a daycare center. The one-story, wood frame Spanish Eclectic Revival style building is approximately 4,800 square feet in size and has a compound plan. The exterior is primarily clad in stucco and the rambling gable roof is covered in Mission style clay tiles. Multi-pane, steel sash, casement and fixed windows pierce the building envelope throughout. According to Virginia and Lee McAlester, the identifying features of the Spanish Eclectic style include a “Low-pitched roof, usually with little or no eave overhang; red tile roof covering. . .one or more prominent arches placed above door or principal window, or beneath porch roof; wall surface usually stucco; façade normally asymmetrical.” The design of the College Terrace Library exhibits all of these features and incorporates other details such as the decorative, tile-capped chimney elaboration; one-story covered porches; arched windows, doors and arcaded entryways and decorative tile gable vents.

The library interior has a cruciform plan, exposed wood ceiling beams, vaulted ceilings, skylights, decorative ironwork and built-in recessed bookshelves. The daycare center, formerly the community center, features an inset stage area at the west end and a rounded corner fireplace with ceramic tile ornament in the southeast corner of its main room.

### ***Alterations***

Some alterations have been made to the interior and building envelope over time to accommodate alternative uses and accessibility requirements. In 1974/75, the west wing of the College Terrace Library building (formerly the community center) was remodeled by the City of Palo Alto for use as a preschool and day care center. Minor programmatic and handicapped accessible alterations were made to the building interior and exterior. A playground was developed around the west end of the building. Despite these alterations however, the College Terrace Library still retains a high degree of integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship feeling and association. Some landscape elements and site features have been added for the daycare center playground; still, the immediate setting remains largely intact. Further, the library’s relationship to its residential setting within the College Terrace neighborhood remains much as it would have during its period of significance and thus retains a high degree of

integrity. On the whole, the building retains the integrity necessary to convey its architectural and cultural significance.

## **CRITERIA FOR HISTORIC DESIGNATION**

### ***Criteria for Designation and Definition of Historic Category 2***

Chapter 16.49, Section 16.49.040 (b) of the Municipal Code provides general criteria that apply to all historic designations in Palo Alto. The criteria are:

1. The structure or site is identified with the lives of historic people or with important events in the city, state or nation;
2. The structure or site is particularly representative of an architectural style or way of life important to the city, state or nation;
3. The structure or site is an example of a type of building which was once common, but is now rare;
4. The structure or site is connected with a business or use which was once common, but is now rare;
5. The architect or building was important;
6. The structure or site contains elements demonstrating outstanding attention to architectural design, detail, materials or craftsmanship.

Palo Alto Municipal Code, Section 16.49.020 (b), establishes the level of importance of properties that meet the general criteria for designation. The focus of the definitions of the Categories is on architectural significance. Category 2 structures are defined as follows:

"Category 2: 'Major building' means any building or group of buildings of major regional importance, meritorious works of the best architects or an outstanding example of an architectural style or the stylistic development of architecture in the state or region. A major building may have some exterior modifications, but the original character is retained."

## **HISTORIC EVALUATION**

Based on an analysis of the criteria for designation and the definition of Historic Category 2, staff concludes that the project meets the criteria for designation and fits the definition of a Category 2 in that:

- The College Terrace Library was designed by noted Bay Area architect Charles K. Sumner. Like other local architects such as Birge Clark, Sumner was significantly influenced by the Spanish eclectic style of architecture that became popular in the 1920s and 1930s. As a result, the city of Palo Alto took on a distinctive architectural character and the style itself has since become strongly associated with the region's architectural heritage. Furthermore, Charles K. Sumner completed a number of commissions in Palo Alto and the Bay Area during his career. He designed the library in the Spanish eclectic style, a style that came to shape the

architectural identity of Palo Alto. Thus, the building is significant both as the work of a prominent local architect and as a reflection of the architectural influences of its time. It was also built by a well-known local contractor, George B. Moore, with the help of WPA laborers during the Great Depression.

- The building retains a high degree of integrity and retains the majority of its original character defining features.
- The building is a well-preserved example of an early branch library, one that was located in a residential neighborhood for ready access by the local community. Built to meet the growing needs of a newly consolidated city, the community center and library building functioned as a cultural, social and educational institution for the residents of south Palo Alto. The west wing was used as a center for countless community events for almost forty years and the east wing continues its use as a library today. Thus, the building itself is significant within the social and cultural history of both the College Terrace neighborhood and the broader Palo Alto community. Further, the building is the oldest extant branch library in Palo Alto and still continues this use today.

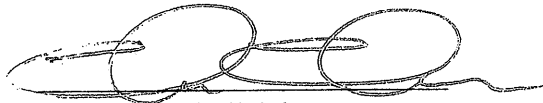
#### ATTACHMENTS

- A. Applicant Submittal Letter, providing background and photos
- B. Department of Parks and Recreation Primary Record Form

#### COURTESY COPIES

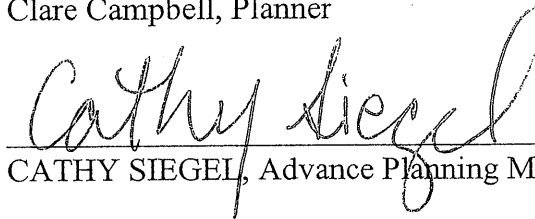
Woojae Kim, Public Works Engineering

PREPARED BY:



Clare Campbell, Planner

REVIEWED BY:



CATHY SIEGEL, Advance Planning Manager




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**GARAVAGLIA • ARCHITECTURE, INC.**


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7 December 2007

**Project #: 2006-043****Re: Reclassification of the College Terrace Library for the Palo Alto Historic Inventory**

COMMERCIAL

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

RESIDENTIAL

**I. Introduction**

Garavaglia Architecture, Inc. (Collaborating Design Professional) entered into a contract with The KPA Group (Prime Design Professional) in March of 2007 to provide professional historic architecture consulting services for the seismic upgrade and rehabilitation of College Terrace Library in Palo Alto, California. As part of this project, Garavaglia Architecture, Inc. was contracted to complete a Historic Structure Report (HSR) for the building. This report is intended as a supplementary document to the HSR and specifically addresses the evaluation and reclassification of the College Terrace Library from a Category 4 Historic Resource to that of a Category 1 or 2 on the Palo Alto Historical Inventory.

Research for the evaluation included review of copies of the City of Palo Alto permit history and architectural drawings for the property provided by the client, as well as review of previous DPR Primary and Building Structure and Object (BSO) forms completed in 1978 by Ruth Wilson. Additional research was conducted at the Palo Alto Historical Association, the San Francisco History Room and online (see References section below). Updated DPR 523 forms are included in the appendix of this document.

**II. Summary**

Garavaglia Architecture, Inc. finds the College Terrace Library, located at 2300 Wellesley Street in Palo Alto, California eligible for listing as a Category 2 resource on the local Palo Alto Historical Inventory. It is significant for its association with a prominent local architect, Charles K. Sumner and a well-known local builder, George B. Moore. Since the time of its construction as a branch library in 1936, it has played a significant role in the College Terrace neighborhood community by serving not only as a library, but also for many years as a community center and meeting place. In addition, the library retains a high degree of material integrity. Therefore, Garavaglia Architecture Inc. recommends that the building be reclassified from a Category 4 to a Category 2 resource on the Palo Alto Historical Inventory.

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### III. Description of the Resource

The College Terrace Library, one of the five branch libraries operated by the City of Palo Alto, is located at 2300 Wellesley Street. Designed by architect Charles K. Sumner and built in 1936, the building's east wing is used as a library and the west wing is leased to a daycare center. The one-story, wood frame Spanish Eclectic Revival style building is approximately 4,800 square feet in size and has a compound plan. The exterior is primarily clad in stucco and the rambling gable roof is covered in Mission style clay tiles. Multi-pane, steel sash, casement and fixed windows pierce the building envelope throughout. According to Virginia and Lee McAlester, the identifying features of the Spanish Eclectic style include a "Low-pitched roof, usually with little or no eave overhang; red tile roof covering...one or more prominent arches placed above door or principal window, or beneath porch roof; wall surface usually stucco; façade normally asymmetrical."<sup>1</sup> The design of the College Terrace Library exhibits all of these features and incorporates other details such as the decorative, tile-capped chimney elaboration; one-story covered porches; arched windows, doors and arcaded entryways and decorative tile gable vents.

The library interior has a cruciform plan, exposed wood ceiling beams, vaulted ceilings, skylights, decorative ironwork and built-in recessed bookshelves. The daycare center, formerly the community center, features an inset stage area at the west end and a rounded corner fireplace with ceramic tile ornament in the southeast corner of its main room.

### IV. Historical Background

Mayfield developed as a separate town, south of Palo Alto, during the latter half of the nineteenth century. In 1870, Frederick Weisshaar and Peter Spacher, German immigrants, purchased 120 acres of the former Robles rancho, covering what is now College Terrace. The property's second owner, Alexander Gordon, bought the land in the late 1880s, subdivided it into lots and advertised it as "Palo Alto, the town of Leland Stanford University." After Senator Stanford filed a lawsuit in opposition, Gordon changed the name of the area to College Terrace. The neighborhood became part of Mayfield in 1891.<sup>2</sup>

College Terrace is a two-block by twelve-block neighborhood bounded by Stanford Avenue to the north and South California Avenue to the South. Amherst Street and Yale Street mark the east and west reaches of this residential district set between Stanford University and the Stanford Research Park. At the time the land was subdivided in the late 1880s, four public parks were developed for College Terrace residents. As shown on the 1925 Sanborn map these were originally Eton and Hampton Parks on Dartmouth Street and Berkeley and Hollywood Parks on Wellesley Street. Renamed in 1968 for notable local figures, Eaton Park became William C. Werry Park; Hampton Park became Frederick W. Weisshaar Park; Berkeley Park became Donaldina M. Cameron Park, and Hollywood Park, where the College Terrace Library was constructed, is now referred to as Mayfield Park.

In the fall of 1914, a branch of the Santa Clara County Library opened in Mayfield and was located in J.P. Schaefer's store; Mrs. Schaefer served as librarian. When Mayfield and Palo

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<sup>1</sup> Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002), 417.

<sup>2</sup> Ward Winslow, *Palo Alto: A Centennial History* (Palo Alto: The Palo Alto Historical Association, 1993), 28.

Alto consolidated in 1925, responsibility for public library services shifted from the hands of Santa Clara County to those of the newly formed city. Though Palo Alto offered use of its Hamilton Avenue Library to the new part of town, the residents wanted something more accessible. Shortly thereafter, funding was made available for a Mayfield branch library and the facility was housed in the old Mayfield City Hall on California Avenue near El Camino Real.<sup>3</sup> The Mayfield branch operated from this location for nearly the next ten years.

The Mayfield branch had, by the early 1930s, outgrown its facilities and a new library and community center was to be constructed in the College Terrace neighborhood to meet the needs of south Palo Alto residents. The new Mayfield Branch Library was opened on November 10, 1936 and opening ceremonies included speeches by several key members of the community.<sup>4</sup> A number of social groups donated gifts to the library; the Mayfield Women's Club contributed \$700.00 for finishing the social hall and the Actus Club was responsible for planting a tree opposite the front entrance.<sup>5</sup>

Located at 2300 Wellesley Street, the new facility was constructed in Hollywood Park in 1936 with Works Progress Administration (WPA) funds.<sup>6</sup> Designed by Bay Area architect Charles K. Sumner, the library was constructed by builder George B. Moore for \$20,400.<sup>7</sup> Originally known as the Mayfield Branch Library, the building was renamed the South Palo Alto Branch Library in 1941.<sup>8</sup> When the Mitchell Park Branch Library opened in 1958, the name changed once again, to College Terrace Library, since both libraries were located in South Palo Alto.

The west wing of the building was originally designed as a community center and became a very popular and much utilized community asset. Organizations that made use of the space included, among others, the Mayfield Women's Club, Santa Clara County Federation of Women's Clubs, Mayfield Service Club, Peninsula Woodwind Ensemble, Tri-City Negro Club, Loma Prieta Chapter of the Sierra Club and the American Association of University Women.<sup>9</sup> The library and social hall were also used over the years for educational exhibitions, community lectures and musical productions, reading group meetings and as an exhibition space for the artwork of local artists. The community center in the west wing of the building was converted for use as a daycare facility in the mid-1970s and the east wing retains its original use as a branch library.

#### Charles K. Sumner

Born Charles Sumner Kaiser in 1874, the Bay Area architect formally changed his given name to Charles Kaiser Sumner during World War I. A transplant from Wilkes-Barre Pennsylvania, Sumner attended the Columbia University School of Architecture and graduated in 1902. After studying abroad on a Perkins fellowship, Sumner joined the New York firm of McKim, Mead

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<sup>3</sup> Elinor V. Cogswell, "Three Rolled Into One," *Palo Alto Times*, 10 November 1956.

<sup>4</sup> *Palo Alto Times*, "Ceremonies Planned at College Terrace," (no date).

<sup>5</sup> *Palo Alto Library News*, "Mayfield Branch," March 1937, Vol. 1, No. 2.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 71.

<sup>7</sup> Ruth Wilson. California Department of Parks and Recreation DPR Series forms, prepared 14/14/1978. Also, *Palo Alto Times*, "Work Starts on Branch Library," 18 May 1936.

<sup>8</sup> *Palo Alto Times*, "Branch Library Now Named South Palo Alto," 14 October 1941.

<sup>9</sup> *Palo Alto Library News*, "Mayfield Branch," March 1937, Vol. 1, No. 2.

and White. After a 1906 visit to the West, Sumner relocated in the same year to Berkeley, California. Sumner designed about fifteen residences in Berkeley as well as the Claremont Club. He also designed a number of commercial and residential buildings in Sacramento during this time.<sup>10</sup>

Ten years after he settled in Berkeley, Sumner relocated to Palo Alto where he would design around 90 buildings between Palo Alto and the Stanford Campus. Though he resided on University Avenue in Palo Alto, Sumner worked from an office in San Francisco.<sup>11</sup> The architect's stylistic repertoire included a range of Period Revival styles such as Spanish Colonial, Mediterranean and Tudor Revival. According to Dames & Moore, "Several of his designs showed the influence of the English Arts and Crafts architect C.F.A. Voysey [and] Birge Clark described Sumner as 'a very sensitive' architect."<sup>12</sup>

About Sumner's stylistic leanings, author Grace Hinton writes:

Sumner worked squarely within the eclectic movement but also mastered the details of many styles. He preferred the Craftsman, Tudor and colonial revival models, as well as the occasional Beaux-Arts/Mediterranean revival structure. After the Spanish eclectic style swept into town--stimulated by George Washington Smith's 1925 design for the Pettigrew house at 1336 Cowper Street in Palo Alto--Sumner worked more and more in that style.<sup>13</sup>

Though Sumner was less than enthusiastic about the aesthetics of the Modern movement, he admired its "expression of function in interior design. Sumner generally provided built-in storage, such as cupboards and closets, as part of the composition of [his] interior spaces."<sup>14</sup> Sumner believed that interiors were more the responsibility of the designer than the decorator and that the architect "was to 'design the interior architecture of walls and ceilings, cabinets, fireplaces, and staircases.'"<sup>15</sup> This approach is evident in the built-in bookcases, exposed beam ceilings, decorative tiled fireplace and other interior elements of the College Terrace Library.

Other projects completed during the course of the architect's noteworthy career include the Forest Rangers' Clubhouse in Yosemite Valley (a National Historic Landmark), the Los Altos Golf and Country Club, the Butte County Courthouse in Oroville and the former Japanese Methodist Church (1940) in Palo Alto. The latter exhibited a number of similarities to the College Terrace Library including the engaged buttresses, multi-pane casement windows, moulded cornice brackets and low, horizontal massing. (See photographs section below for historic photo).

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<sup>10</sup> Grace Hinton, biography for Charles K. Sumner in *Historic Houses III: San Juan Neighborhood, Stanford University*. (Stanford: Stanford Historical Society, 2005), 11.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Michael Corbett and Denise Bradley, Final Survey Report: Palo Alto Historical Survey Update, August 1997-August 2000 (San Francisco: Dames & Moore, 2001), 6-117 to 6-118.

<sup>13</sup> Grace Hinton, biography for Charles K. Sumner, page 11.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, 12.



Charles K. Sumner died in May of 1948, at age 74. His obituary states that he served a number of years on Palo Alto's planning commission and "was actively interested in all civic planning related to the growth of Palo Alto as an ideal home community."<sup>16</sup>

### George B. Moore

A native of Pennsylvania, George Bailey Moore was born in 1876 and was working as a carpenter and builder in Philadelphia by age 24. He relocated to Mayfield, California in 1905 and came to play an active role in the development of the community.<sup>17</sup> U.S. census records show that George B. and Bertha C. Moore were living on Stanford Avenue in Mayfield by 1910 with their children George Jr., Francis and Ross. By that time, George had established his career as a contractor; he was a member of the city council for a number of years and also served a term as mayor. Moore helped organize the early board of trade, which later became the Mayfield Chamber of Commerce.<sup>18</sup> George B. Moore passed away in 1940. According to his obituary, Moore "was one of the most active contractors in the city, being responsible for the Mayfield Branch Library, the Bank of America Building, the Worth Building, both on California and El Camino Real, and the Granville Wood clinic building on the highway."<sup>19</sup>

## V. Evaluative Framework

The College Terrace Library was first evaluated by Ruth Wilson in 1978 and recorded on State of California Department of Recreation Historic Resources Inventory forms. This early survey provided a cursory description and statement of significance, stating first that the "competent but not exceptional library and community building has played an important part in the cultural life of the area" and that it was a "fine example of the Spanish Colonial revival used for a casually informal public building."<sup>20</sup> The building was then classified as a Category 4 building and is listed as such on the Palo Alto Historical Resources Inventory today.

The following information is from the City of Palo Alto Municipal Code. Historic Preservation information is outlined in Title 16: Building Regulations, Chapter 16.49 Historic Preservation. Palo Alto has adopted specific Definitions (Section 16.49.020 of the Municipal Code) for the categorization of historic properties for inclusion on the Palo Alto Historical and Architectural Resources Report and Inventory. These are used to classify buildings that are found to be significant at the local level.

Category 1: "Exceptional building" means any building or group of buildings of preeminent national or state importance, meritorious work of the best architects or an outstanding example of the stylistic development of architecture in the United States. An exceptional building has had either no exterior modifications or such minor ones that the overall appearance of the building is in its original character.

Category 2: "Major building" means any building or group of buildings of major regional importance, meritorious works of the best architects or an outstanding example of an architectural style or the stylistic development of architecture in the state or region.

<sup>16</sup> *Palo Alto Times*, "Charles K. Sumner, Local architect and city planner, succumbs at 74," May 26, 1948.

<sup>17</sup> *Palo Alto Times*, "G.B. Moore Keeps a Date With Death," 21 September 1940.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> Ruth Wilson. California Department of Parks and Recreation DPR Series forms, prepared 14/14/1978.

A major building may have some exterior modifications, but the original character is retained.

Category 3 or 4: "Contributing building" means any building or group of buildings which are good local examples of architectural styles and which relate to the character of a neighborhood grouping in scale, materials, proportion or other factors. A contributing building may have had extensive or permanent changes made to the original design, such as inappropriate additions, extensive removal of architectural details, or wooden facades resurfaced in asbestos or stucco.

According to Palo Alto Municipal Code Section 16.49.020(f), a "significant building" is defined as "any building, group of buildings or site categorized on the historic inventory as number one or number two and all structures within historic districts."

In addition to the classification categories listed above, the City has specific criteria for designation of historic structures/sites or districts to the historic inventory:

- (1) The structure or site is identified with the lives of historic people or with important events in the city, state or nation;
- (2) The structure or site is particularly representative of an architectural style or way of life important to the city, state or nation;
- (3) The structure or site is an example of a type of building which was once common, but is now rare;
- (4) The structure or site is connected with a business or use which was once common, but is now rare;
- (5) The architect or building was important;
- (6) The structure or site contains elements demonstrating outstanding attention to architectural design, detail, materials or craftsmanship. (Ord. 3721 § 1 (part), 1986)

### **Applying City of Palo Alto Criteria for Evaluation to 2300 Wellesley Street**

According to the City of Palo Alto, a "Category 2: "Major building" means any building or group of buildings of major regional importance, meritorious works of the best architects or an outstanding example of an architectural style or the stylistic development of architecture in the state or region. A major building may have some exterior modifications, but the original character is retained.

The College Terrace Library at 2300 Wellesley Street in Palo Alto was designed by noted Bay Area architect Charles K. Sumner in 1936. Like other local architects such as Birge Clark, Sumner was significantly influenced by the Spanish eclectic style of architecture that became popular in the 1920s and 1930s. As a result, the Palo Alto took on a distinctive architectural character and the style itself has since become strongly associated with the region's architectural heritage.

The building retains a high degree of integrity and retains the majority of its original character defining features. Designed by a prominent local architect in the Spanish eclectic style, the building today reflects the stylistic development of architecture in Palo Alto during the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As such, the building appears to be eligible for reclassification as a Category 2 building on the Palo Alto Historic Inventory.

Furthermore, the property was found to meet additional criteria for designation:

(1) *The structure or site is identified with the lives of historic people or with important events in the city, state or nation;*

(5) *The architect or building was important;*

As discussed above, Charles K. Sumner was a noted local architect who completed a number of commissions in Palo Alto and the Bay Area during his career. He designed the library in the Spanish eclectic style, a style that came to shape the architectural identity of Palo Alto. Thus, the building is significant both as the work of a prominent local architect and as a reflection of the architectural influences of its time. Further, the building is the oldest extant branch library in Palo Alto and still continues this use today. It was built by a well-known local contractor, George B. Moore, with the help of WPA laborers during the Great Depression.

The building is a well-preserved example of an early branch library, one that was located in a residential neighborhood for ready access by the local community. Built to meet the growing needs of a newly consolidated city, the community center and library building functioned as a cultural, social and educational institution for the residents of south Palo Alto. The west wing was used as a center for countless community events for almost forty years and the east wing continues its use as a library today. Thus, the building itself is significant within the social and cultural history of both the College Terrace neighborhood and the broader Palo Alto community.

### **Integrity**

As defined in the National Park Service's *National Register Bulletin #15*, integrity is "the ability of a property to convey its significance...The evaluation of integrity is sometimes a subjective judgment, but it must always be grounded in an understanding of a property's physical features and how they relate to its significance."<sup>21</sup> Integrity is the measure by which properties are evaluated. To retain integrity a property must have most of the seven aspects of integrity as defined by the National Register Criteria for Evaluation.

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<sup>21</sup> *NRB 15*, Section VIII, 44.

Summary Table for Integrity

The College Terrace Library, Palo Alto, California	Integrity Factor
<b>Location</b> "... is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred."	H
<b>Design</b> "...is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property."	H
<b>Setting</b> "...is the physical environment of a historical property."	G/H
<b>Materials</b> "...are the physical elements that...form a historic property."	H
<b>Workmanship</b> "...is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory."	H
<b>Feeling</b> "...is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time."	H
<b>Association</b> "...is the direct link between a property and the event or person for which the property is significant."	H
H = High Integrity; G = Good Integrity; M = Moderate Integrity; L = Low Integrity	

Some alterations have been made to the interior and building envelope over time to accommodate alternative uses and accessibility requirements. In 1974/75, the west wing of the College Terrace Library building (formerly the community center) was remodeled by the City of Palo Alto for use as a preschool and day care center. Minor programmatic and handicapped accessible alterations were made to the building interior, exterior of the building and a playground was developed around the west end of the building. Despite these alterations however, the College Terrace Library still retains a high degree of integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship feeling and association. Some landscape elements and site features have been added for the daycare center playground; still, the immediate setting remains largely intact. Further, the library's relationship to its residential setting within the College Terrace neighborhood remains much as it would have during its period of significance and thus retains a high degree of integrity. On the whole, the building retains the integrity necessary to convey its architectural and cultural significance.

## VI. Conclusion

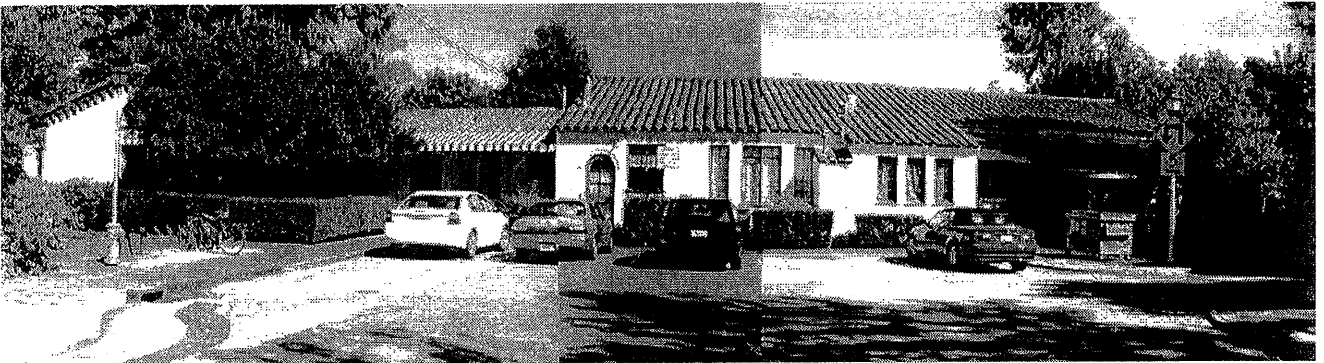
Garavaglia Architecture, Inc. concludes that the College Terrace Library at 2300 Wellesley Street in the College Terrace neighborhood of Palo Alto is eligible for reclassification from a Category 4 to a Category 2 resource on the Palo Alto Historic Inventory. The building retains a high degree of integrity and is significant for its association with notable people and events of regional importance.

## VII. Photographs

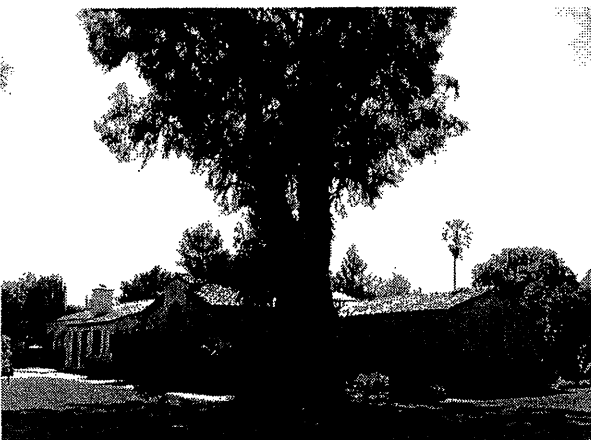
### Exterior



South (front) elevation, composite image.



North (rear) elevation, composite image.



Looking northwest.

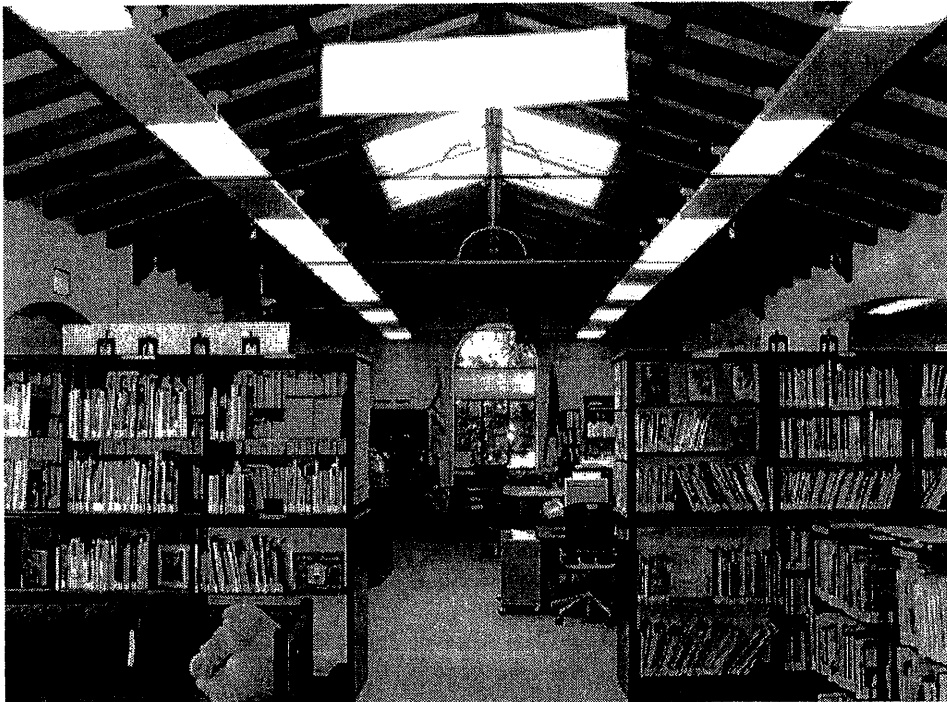


Looking northeast.

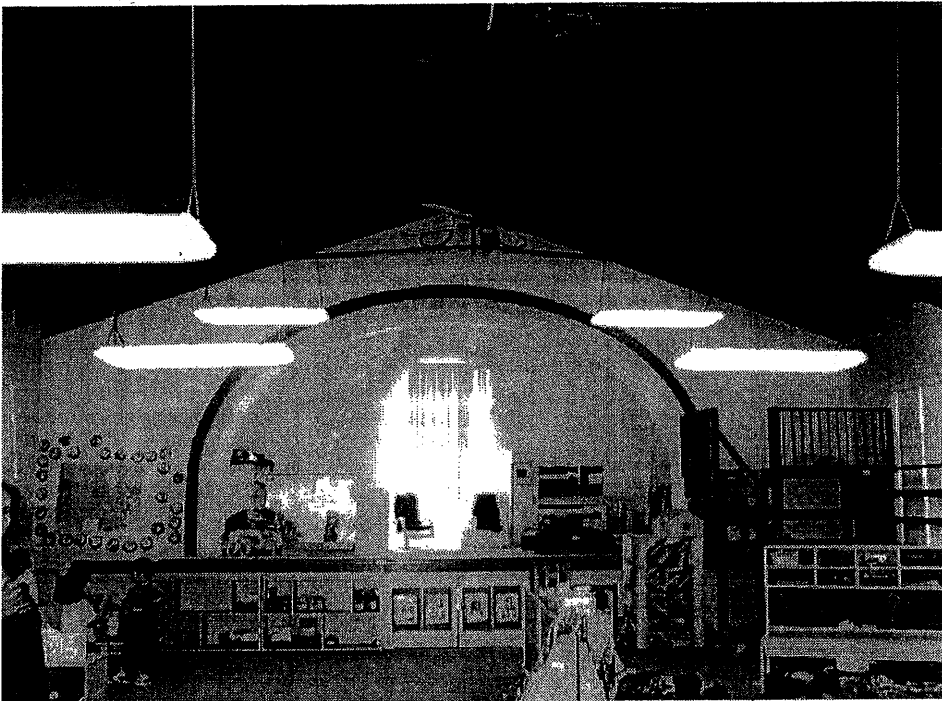
## Interior



Library: east wing stacks.



Library: view to north end of reading room.



Childcare center: view to west end of main room.



Childcare center: view to east end of main room.

## References

- Corbett, Michael and Denise Bradley. *Final Survey Report: Palo Alto Historical Survey Update, August 1997-August 2000*. San Francisco: Dames & Moore, 2001.
- Directory of Palo Alto, Mayfield, Menlo Park, The Campus. Palo Alto: The Times Publishing Co., 1904.
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## Professional Qualifications

Garavaglia Architecture, Inc. is a full service, architectural and preservation focused firm, committed to providing innovative and cost efficient solutions for a variety of historical, architectural and planning needs and for a broad range of clients, including building owners, federal and local agencies, private developers and non-profit groups. Since the establishment of the firm in 1986, we have developed expertise in providing clients with creative solutions to their design needs, including building renovations and upgrades, historic preservation, commercial and retail development, office and retail interiors, space planning, and master plan analysis. We specialize in historic preservation and building renovation and reuse. We approach each project as unique to create a range of solutions that are developed to provide a positive design impact that respects the client's goals and budget as well as the historic character of the building and its site.

Our experienced staff enables us to provide a wide range of services that support our clients needs in all stages of the project from initial planning to post occupancy review. The skilled staff of professionals provides hands-on contact with local agencies and communities to expedite situations as they arise, with immediate response and resourcefulness. The firm's work has been published, praising the ability to design and renovate existing structures utilizing creative design solutions.

### **Sarah Hahn** **Architectural Historian**

Qualifies under the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards - *Architectural History*

### Resume / Academic Background

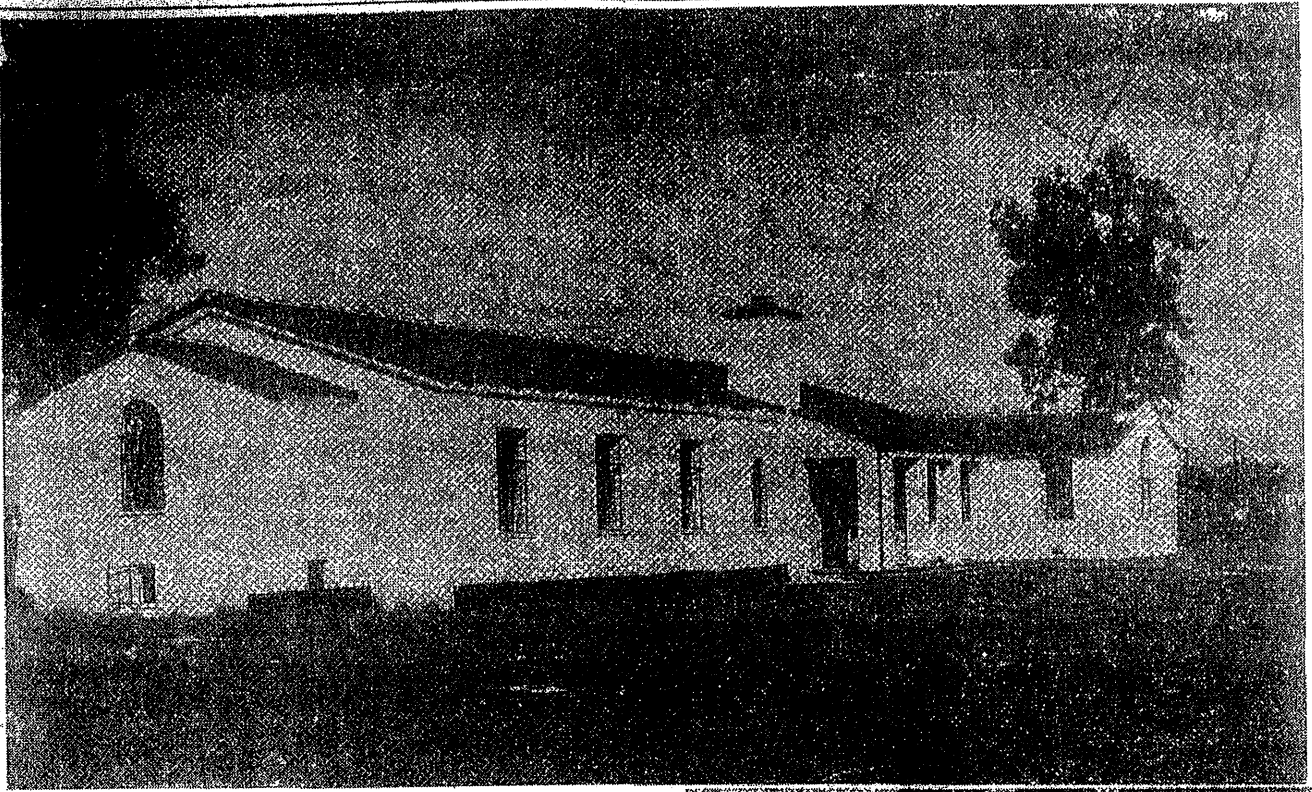
Ms. Hahn came to Garavaglia Architecture and Circa: Historic Property Development with a broad background historic preservation, art history, graphic and fine arts. She is an Architectural Historian with a range of experience in the field including hands-on conservation both in the U.S. and abroad, preservation planning, interpretation and education, and extensive cultural resource documentation and evaluation. Her research interests have lead to a specialization in the architecture of the New Deal, specifically the work of the Civilian Conservation Corps in national and state parks throughout the United States.

Ms. Hahn's work at Garavaglia Architecture and with Circa: Historic Property Development includes historic resource evaluations, design review, historic context statements, historic structure reports and reconnaissance and intensive level survey work. Her background in graphic design and fine arts augments her research expertise and superior report and writing skills.

Professional affiliations include the National Trust for Historic Preservation; the Historic Preservation League of Oregon; and the California Preservation Foundation. Ms. Hahn's educational background includes a Master of Science in Historic Preservation from University of Oregon and a Bachelor of Science in Graphic Design and Art History from the University of Evansville, Indiana.

# Mayfield Library Awaits Opening

Here is front view of the newly completed Mayfield branch of the Public Library which will be formally opened tonight with exercises and continue to observe "open house" every afternoon and evening this week, with guides to conduct visitors through the building. At the desk below is shown Miss Louise Mahan, librarian in charge.



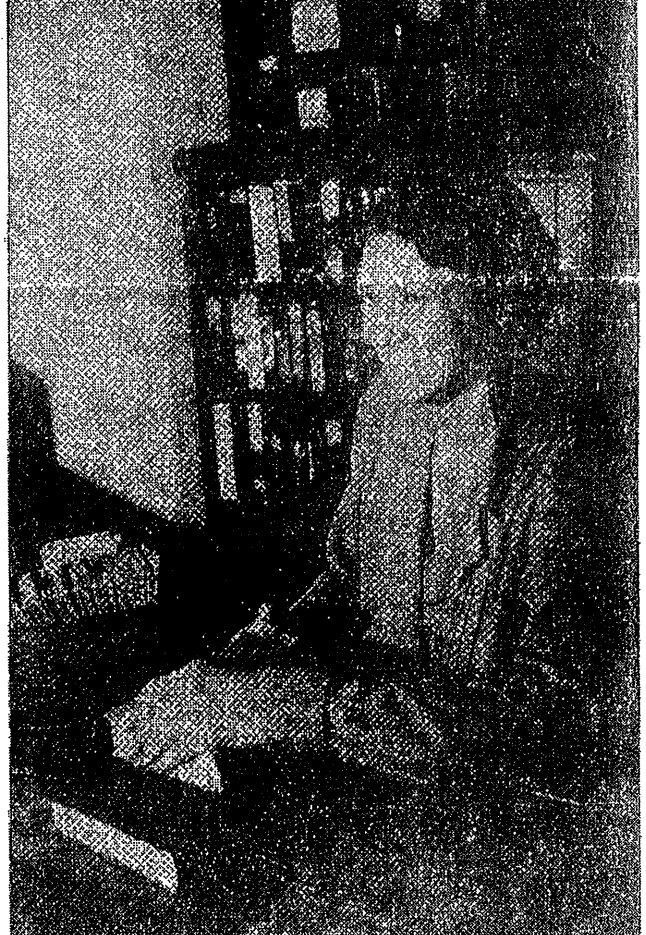
## NEW LIBRARY BRANCH PLANS 'OPEN HOUSE'

### Public Is Invited To Formal Exercises This Evening

Tonight at 8:30 o'clock the newly completed Mayfield Branch Library will be opened formally.

An invitation to attend the event was extended last night by the committee in charge of the building, consisting of Glenn W. Goddard, chairman, Mrs. Anthony Mohr, Mrs. W. O. Shreve, Mrs. Walter Chidester, Dorsey A. Lyon, and Gilbert Shambaugh.

A program has been prepared to consist of short talks by city and library officials. The "open house" will be continued each afternoon and evening this week, with Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts acting as guides, and prominent women of the city serving as hostesses.



MISS LOUISE MAHAN  
(Mayfield Branch Librarian)

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

Primary #  
HRI #  
Trinomial  
NRHP Status Code

Other Listings  
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 4

\*Resource Name or #: College Terrace Library

P1. Other Identifier:

\*P2. Location:  Not for Publication  Unrestricted

\*a. County: Santa Clara

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

\*b. USGS 7.5' Quad:

Date:

T ; R ; \_ of \_ of Sec ; M.D. B.M.

c. Address: 2300 Wellesley Street

City: Palo Alto

Zip: 94306

d. UTM: Zone: 10 ; mE/ mN (G.P.S.)

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

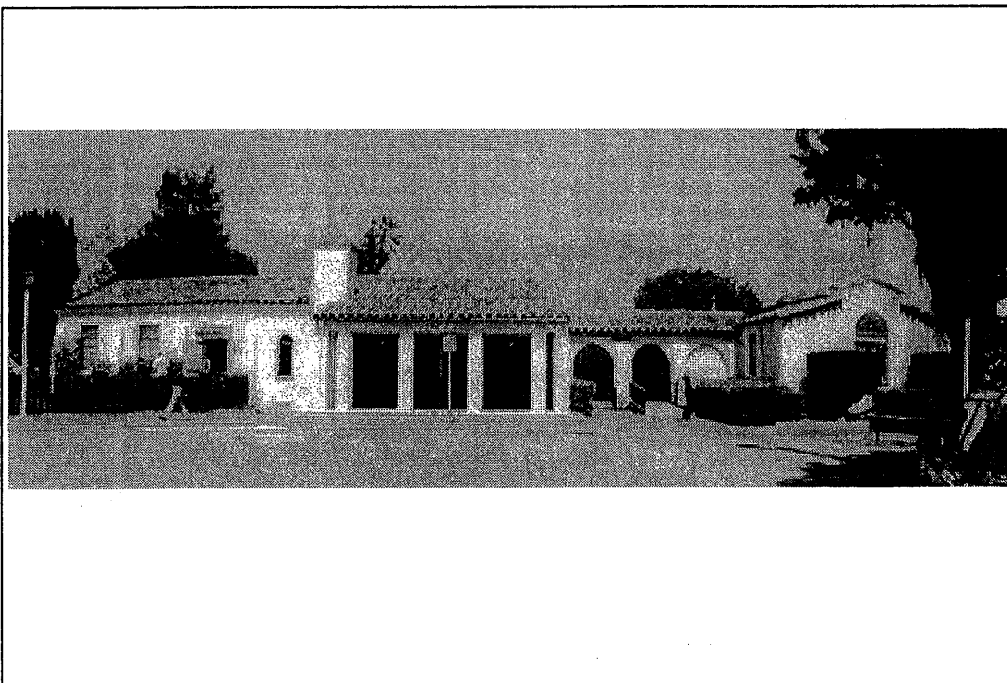
\*P3a. Description: (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)

The College Terrace Library is located at 2300 Wellesley Street, between College Avenue and California Avenue, in the College Terrace neighborhood of Palo Alto. The one-story, wood frame Spanish Eclectic Revival style building is approximately 4,800 square feet in size and has a complex plan. The exterior is primarily clad in stucco and the rambling gable roof is covered in Mission-style clay tiles. Multi-pane, steel sash, casement and fixed windows pierce the building envelope throughout. The identifying features of the Spanish Eclectic style include a "low-pitched roof, usually with little or no eave overhang; red tile roof covering...one or more prominent arches placed above door or principal window, or beneath porch roof; wall surface usually stucco; façade normally asymmetrical" (McAlester, 417). The design of the College Terrace Library exhibits all of these features and incorporates other details such as the decorative, tile-capped chimney elaboration; one-story covered porches; arched windows, doors and arcaded entryways, and decorative tile gable vents. The building's east wing is used as a library and the west wing is currently leased to a daycare center though originally functioned as a community center. The building is in good condition.

Significant landscape features include three commemorative magnolia trees planted in memory of Jim Culpepper, a College Terrace Library advocate and founder of the College Terrace neighborhood group. Two of these magnolias are located in the lawn on the California Avenue (south) side and the other is about 15 feet from the building on the Stanford Avenue (north) side.

\*P3b. Resource Attributes: HP14. Government Building

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



P5b. Description of Photo: South elevation -composite image (Garavaglia Architecture, Inc., 5/25/2006).

\*P6. Date Constructed/Age and

Sources:  Historic

Prehistoric  Both

1936 (Assessor records/existing drawings)

\*P7. Owner and Address:

The City of Palo Alto  
3201 E. Bayshore  
Palo Alto, CA 94301

\*P8. Recorded by:

Sarah Hahn  
Garavaglia Architecture, Inc.  
One Sutter Street, Suite 910  
San Francisco, CA 94104

\*P9. Date Recorded:

September 2007

\*P10. Survey Type: Intensive

\*P11. Report Citation: College Terrace Library Reclassification Report (November 2007) by Garavaglia Architecture, Inc.

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

DPR 523A (1/95)

\*Required information

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

Primary #  
 HRI#

Page 2 of 4

\*NRHP Status Code Cal Reg: 5S1

\*Resource Name or # College Terrace Library

- B1. Historic Name: Mayfield Branch Library, South Palo Alto Branch Library  
 B2. Common Name:  
 B3. Original Use: Library and community center      B4. Present Use: Library and childcare center  
 \*B5. **Architectural Style:** Spanish Eclectic  
 \*B6. **Construction History:** Built 1936. Reroofing 1973-4. Community center adapted for use as childcare center 1974. ADA upgrades 1994/1996.

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

\*B8. **Related Features:** Commemorative magnolia trees.

B9a. Architect: Charles K. Sumner      b. Builder: George B. Moore

\*B10. **Significance: Theme:** Architecture, Community development    **Area:** Palo Alto  
**Period of Significance:** 1936-1957      **Property Type:** Library      **Applicable Criteria:** Palo Alto  
 (Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

Ruth Wilson completed a California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR523) form for the College Terrace Library in December 1978. This report utilized the historic background information provided in the DPR523 form and Garavaglia Architecture, Inc. conducted additional research to clarify and expand the existing historic context.

**College Terrace Library**

Mayfield developed as a separate town, south of Palo Alto, during the latter half of the nineteenth century. In 1870, Frederick Weisshaar and Peter Spacher, German immigrants, purchased 120 acres of the former Robles rancho, covering what is now College Terrace. The property's second owner, Alexander Gordon, bought the land in the late 1880s, subdivided it into lots and advertised it as "Palo Alto, the town of Leland Stanford University." After Senator Stanford filed a lawsuit in opposition, Gordon changed the name of the area to College Terrace. The neighborhood became part of Mayfield in 1891 (Winslow, 28).

In the fall of 1914, a branch of the Santa Clara County Library opened in Mayfield. When Mayfield and Palo Alto consolidated in 1925, responsibility for public library services shifted from the hands of Santa Clara County to those of the newly formed city. Though Palo Alto offered use of its Hamilton Avenue Library to the new part of town, the residents wanted something more accessible. Shortly thereafter, funding was made available for a Mayfield branch library and the facility was housed in the old Mayfield City Hall on California Avenue near El Camino Real (see continuation sheets).

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: None.

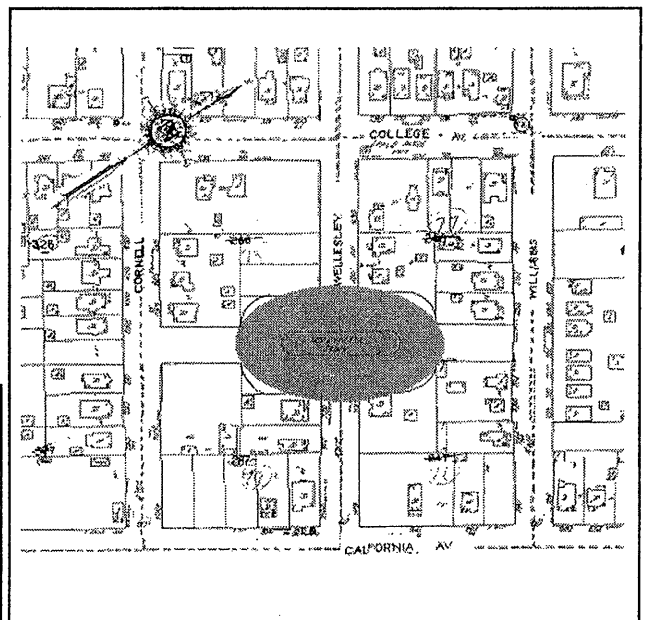
\*B12. **References:** Corbett, Michael and Denise Bradley. *Final Survey Report: Palo Alto Historical Survey Update, August 1997-August 2000*. San Francisco: Dames & Moore, 2001; Directory of Palo Alto, Mayfield, Menlo Park, The Campus. Palo Alto: The Times Publishing Co., 1904; Gullard, Pamela and Nancy Lund. *History of Palo Alto: The Early Years*. San Francisco: Scottwall Associates, 1989; McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002; Palo Alto Historical Association archives; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for Mayfield, California: 1904, Sheet 1; 1908, Sheet 2; 1926, Sheet 6; 1925-45, Sheet 6; *Santa Clara County Heritage Resource Inventory*. San Jose, California: County of Santa Clara Historical Heritage Commission, 1999; United States Census Records: 1900, 1910, 1920, and 1930; Wilson, Ruth, Lucy Evans and Dorothy Regnery. *Mayfield: 1850-1925*. Palo Alto: Palo Alto Historical Association, 1976; Winslow, Ward. *Palo Alto: A Centennial History*. Palo Alto: The Palo Alto Historical Association, 1993.

B13. Remarks: Sketch map created using the 1925 Mayfield Sanborn map (1945 update).

\*B14. **Evaluator:**  
 Sarah Hahn  
 Garavaglia Architecture, Inc.  
 One Sutter Street, Suite 910  
 San Francisco, CA 94104

\*Date of Evaluation: November 2007

(This space reserved for official comments.)



\*Recorded by: Garavaglia Architecture, Inc.

\*Date: November 2007

Continuation

Update

The first Mayfield branch had, by the early 1930s, outgrown its facilities and a new library and community center was to be constructed in the College Terrace neighborhood to meet the needs of south Palo Alto residents. Located at 2300 Wellesley Street, the new facility was constructed in Hollywood Park in 1936 with Works Progress Administration (WPA) funds.<sup>1</sup> Designed by Bay Area architect Charles K. Sumner, the library was constructed by builder George B. Moore for \$20,400.<sup>2</sup> Originally known as the Mayfield Branch Library, the building was renamed the South Palo Alto Branch Library in 1941.<sup>3</sup> When the Mitchell Park Branch Library opened in 1958, the name changed once again, to College Terrace Library, since both libraries were located in South Palo Alto.

The west wing of the building was originally designed as a community center and became a very popular and much utilized community asset. Organizations that made use of the space included, among others, the Mayfield Women's Club, Santa Clara County Federation of Women's Clubs, Mayfield Service Club, Peninsula Woodwind Ensemble, Tri-City Negro Club, Loma Prieta Chapter of the Sierra Club and the American Association of University Women.<sup>4</sup> The library and social hall were also used over the years for educational exhibitions, community lectures and musical productions, reading group meetings and as an exhibition space for the artwork of local artists.

The community center in the west wing of the building was converted for use as a daycare facility in the mid-1970s and the east wing retains its original use as a branch library. The College Terrace Library has the distinction of being the oldest library in the Palo Alto library system.

#### Charles K. Sumner

Born Charles Sumner Kaiser in 1874, the Bay Area architect formally changed his given name to Charles Kaiser Sumner during World War I. A transplant from Wilkes-Barre Pennsylvania, Sumner attended the Columbia University School of Architecture and graduated in 1902. After studying abroad on a Perkins fellowship, Sumner joined the New York firm of McKim, Mead and White. After a 1906 visit to the West, Sumner relocated in the same year to Berkeley, California. Sumner designed about fifteen residences in Berkeley as well as the Claremont Club. He also designed a number of commercial and residential buildings in Sacramento during this time.<sup>5</sup>

Ten years after he settled in Berkeley, Sumner relocated to Palo Alto where he would design around 90 buildings between Palo Alto and the Stanford Campus. Though he resided on University Avenue in Palo Alto, Sumner worked from an office in San Francisco.<sup>6</sup> The architect's stylistic repertoire included a range of Period Revival styles such as Spanish Colonial, Mediterranean and Tudor Revival. According to Dames & Moore, "Several of his designs showed the influence of the English Arts and Crafts architect C.F.A. Voysey [and] Birge Clark described Sumner as 'a very sensitive' architect."<sup>7</sup>

About Sumner's stylistic leanings, author Grace Hinton writes:

Sumner worked squarely within the eclectic movement but also mastered the details of many styles. He preferred the Craftsman, Tudor and colonial revival models, as well as the occasional Beaux-Arts/Mediterranean revival structure. After the Spanish eclectic style swept into town--stimulated by George Washington Smith's 1925 design for the Pettigrew house at 1336 Cowper Street in Palo Alto--Sumner worked more and more in that style.<sup>8</sup>

Though Sumner was less than enthusiastic about the aesthetics of the Modern movement, he admired its "expression of function in interior design. Sumner generally provided built-in storage, such as cupboards and closets, as part of the composition of [his] interior spaces."<sup>9</sup> Sumner believed that interiors were more the responsibility of the designer than the decorator and that the architect "was to 'design the interior architecture of walls and ceilings, cabinets, fireplaces, and staircases.'"<sup>10</sup> This approach is evident in the built-in bookcases, exposed beam ceilings, decorative tiled fireplace and other interior elements of the College Terrace Library.

Other projects completed during the course of the architect's noteworthy career include the Forest Rangers' Clubhouse in Yosemite Valley (a National Historic Landmark), the Los Altos Golf and Country Club, the Butte County Courthouse in Oroville and the former Japanese Methodist Church (1940) in Palo Alto. The latter exhibited a number of similarities to the College Terrace Library including the engaged buttresses, multi-pane casement windows, moulded cornice brackets and low, horizontal massing. (See below).

Charles K. Sumner died in May of 1948, at age 74. His obituary states that he served a number of years on Palo Alto's planning commission and "was actively interested in all civic planning related to the growth of Palo Alto as an ideal home community."<sup>11</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Palo Alto Library News*, "Mayfield Branch," March 1937, Vol. 1, No. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Ruth Wilson. California Department of Parks and Recreation DPR Series forms, prepared 14/14/1978. Also, *Palo Alto Times*, "Work Starts on Branch Library," 18 May 1936.

<sup>3</sup> *Palo Alto Times*, "Branch Library Now Named South Palo Alto," 14 October 1941.

<sup>4</sup> *Palo Alto Library News*, "Mayfield Branch," March 1937, Vol. 1, No. 2.

<sup>5</sup> Grace Hinton, biography for Charles K. Sumner in *Historic Houses III: San Juan Neighborhood, Stanford University*. (Stanford: Stanford Historical Society, 2005), 11.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Michael Corbett and Denise Bradley, Final Survey Report: Palo Alto Historical Survey Update, August 1997-August 2000 (San Francisco: Dames & Moore, 2001), 6-117 to 6-118.

<sup>8</sup> Grace Hinton, biography for Charles K. Sumner, page 11.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>11</sup> *Palo Alto Times*, "Charles K. Sumner, Local architect and city planner, succumbs at 74," May 26, 1948.



Japanese Methodist Church, 306 Page Mill Road (*Palo Alto Times*, 1940).

#### George B. Moore

A native of Pennsylvania, George Bailey Moore was born in 1876 and was working as a carpenter and builder in Philadelphia by age 24. He relocated to Mayfield, California in 1905 and came to play an active role in the development of the community.<sup>12</sup> U.S. census records show that George B. and Bertha C. Moore were living on Stanford Avenue in Mayfield by 1910 with their children George Jr., Francis and Ross. By that time, George had established his career as a contractor; he was a member of the city council for a number of years and also served a term as mayor. Moore helped organize the early board of trade, which later became the Mayfield Chamber of Commerce.<sup>13</sup> George B. Moore passed away in 1940. According to his obituary, Moore "was one of the most active contractors in the city, being responsible for the Mayfield Branch Library, the Bank of America Building, the Worth Building, both on California and El Camino Real, and the Granville Wood clinic building on the highway."<sup>14</sup>

#### Evaluation

The College Terrace Library at 2300 Wellesley Street in Palo Alto was designed by noted Bay Area architect Charles K. Sumner and built by a well-known local contractor, George B. Moore, with the help of WPA laborers during the Great Depression. Sumner designed the library in the Spanish eclectic style, a style that came to shape the architectural identity of Palo Alto. Thus, the building is significant both as the work of a prominent local architect and as a reflection of the architectural influences of its time.

Built to meet the growing needs of a newly consolidated city, the community center and library building functioned as a cultural, social and educational institution for the residents of south Palo Alto. The west wing was used as a center for countless community events for almost forty years and the east wing has been used as a library since 1936. Thus, the building itself is significant within the social and cultural history of both the College Terrace neighborhood and the broader Palo Alto community.

The building is the oldest extant branch library in use in Palo Alto today. It retains a high degree of integrity and retains the majority of its original character defining features and appears to be eligible for local listing as a Category 2 building on the Palo Alto Historic Inventory.

<sup>12</sup> *Palo Alto Times*, "G.B. Moore Keeps a Date With Death," 21 September 1940.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*