

WILDCARE – DESIGN REVIEW

76 Albert Park Lane, San Rafael CA

August 1, 2022



Prepared by

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INTRODUCTION

This report (Historic Design Review) was prepared for the City of San Rafael's review of the proposed project located at 76 Albert Park Lane (WildCare). The report was prepared by Valerie Nagel, Architect, who was retained to serve as historic preservation consultant for this building. An earlier Historic Assessment prepared by Valerie Nagel and dated June 2022 determined that the existing parish hall / WildCare's main building, excluding the side additions and loft space, appears to be eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources.

The Historic Design Review describes and analyzes the architect's proposed design and demonstrates compliance with "The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation". Design documents prepared by Fairchild Brohms Design dated July 25, 2022 were reviewed for purposes of this report.

The report is divided into five sections. 1) The Proposed Project includes the proposed new building and rehabilitation of 76 Albert Park Lane. It also describes the physical characteristics of the original building. 2) Historic Resource discusses the property's eligibility as a historic resource. 3) Compliance Requirements identify requirements set forth in CEQA and the California Register. 4) The last section of the report, Design Review is a review of the architect's proposed design and a discussion regarding its compliance with "The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation".

This document is an overview and not intended to be an exhaustive inventory. Its purpose is to provide information to the City of San Rafael and further guidance to the project design team. A more focused review may be necessary as work is more clearly defined and additional "character defining features" are potentially identified or elements uncovered. If so, these additional elements will need to be evaluated.

PROPOSED PROJECT

The proposed project for 76 Albert Park Lane is to build new facilities on WildCare's existing site. This project will allow for a more functional space to meet the needs of the organization, the rehabilitating wildlife and the community. The proposed 15,085 sf project consists of a three story building wrapping the original parish hall on two sides. There will be a usable courtyard on the west side of the site and a usable rooftop with caging areas. All existing additions to the parish hall and miscellaneous small buildings are not character defining and will be removed. The parish hall will serve as the meeting / multi-use room for WildCare and be moved to the front of the site along the creek.

Neighborhood

WildCare is currently located within a multi-residential neighborhood. It is located approximately two blocks south and east of San Rafael's original downtown commercial area. This area was not developed until the 1950's due to its lower elevation and proximity to the creek.



Parish hall shortly after moved to 76 Albert Park Lane, 1954, Marin County Free Library, California Room

Existing Structure - Parish Hall Building Description

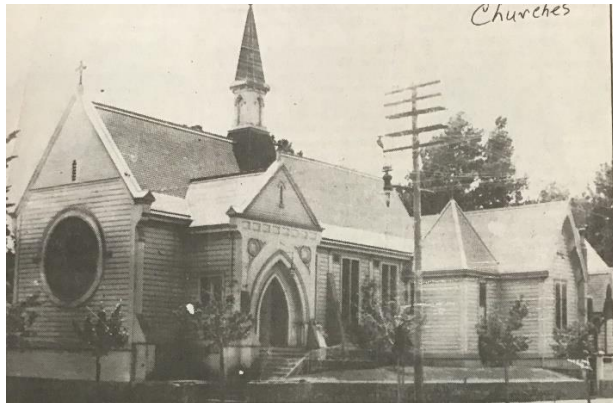
This main building was built in 1879 as a parish hall for St. Paul's Episcopal Church in downtown San Rafael. The parish hall was adjacent the church along Fourth Street, continuing the line of the church. There was a tower constructed at the intersection of the two buildings. (Sanborn map 1887) The church and parish hall were moved in 1923 to the church's present location of 1123 Court Street. At that time, the parish hall was reoriented in relationship to the church building. The hall was placed forward and perpendicular to the church, creating a two sided courtyard (Sanborn map 1924). The Optimist Club of San Rafael purchased the Parish Hall in 1954. At this time, it was moved to its present location, 76 Albert Park Lane, San Rafael. It was lifted and moved with a large truck and trailer.

The WildCare building originally St. Paul's parish hall is a one story wood frame rectangular building. It is approximately 51 x 26 feet (1,200 square feet). It is constructed entirely of old growth California redwood and Oregon white pine.

The building has a steeply-pitched gabled roof with an asymmetrical cross gable. The gable ends have scalloped bargeboard eaves. Its exterior walls were originally weatherboard siding which was later covered in stucco.

The main entry on the north elevation is to the right of this cross gable. There are four wood steps and a small landing at the front entry. The wood multi-light double door and arched clearstory originally had a gable roof / overhang as can be seen in the 1915 news clipping. (See image above) This wood door has been replaced but the arched clerestory and chamfered trim remain. There is also a vertical double rectangular window divided into three lights with chamfered wood trim in the gable end. Double vertical windows above in the gable end were added at a later date. To the

right of the door are double lancet windows shaded by a hooded gable with decorative bargeboard. The roof has two small gable shaped vents just below the ridge.



St. Paul's Episcopal & parish hall, right side photo, 1915
Marin County Free Library, California Room



Truck and parish hall during moving process, 1954

The rear or south elevation has a smaller rectangular window with chamfered trim in the cross gable end. On this side of the building, the bargeboard is simplified and not scalloped like the front of the building. Double vertical windows in the upper gable end were added at a later date. There were two sets of double lancet windows shaded by a hooded gable with decorative bargeboard on the rear elevation. One of these pairs of windows was removed and filled in at some unknown date, but the hooded gable remains.

The east and west elevations have additions and the exterior elements have been obscured. Neither of these additions have any significance.

The interior of the building is finished with old growth California redwood and Oregon white pine, oiled and varnished. Interior walls and ceiling are all tongue and groove old growth narrow redwood paneling set at oblique diagonals forming a herringbone pattern. Roof and post supports have chamfered corners, characteristic of the Carpenter Gothic style. There is an angled wainscot band that appears to wrap the space. Most of the walls have been furred out with drywall. The original wood floor has been retained. The ceiling is supported by two large structural scissor trusses with a bottom rounded member with a slight point.

It appears that the arched wall on the west end of the interior space may have been infilled with tongue and groove paneling set at oblique diagonals to match the original. On the opposite end, a loft space and stairs were added, date unknown. Doors throughout have been replaced. The pointed arch doors below the loft addition were added at a later date, see news clipping photo above.

HISTORIC RESOURCE

A Historic Assessment was prepared by Valerie Nagel, Architect dated July 20, 2022. This report describes and identifies the parish hall / WildCare's main building. This main building, excluding the side additions and loft space appears to be eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources under criteria #3 "It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values". The subject property is an excellent example of Carpenter Gothic Architecture and is one of the few buildings in San Rafael that qualify as an example of this style. However, the additions are not compatible with the original structure or of the same quality of detailing or materials. Therefore, the additions do not appear to be significant.

Architectural Style

Carpenter Gothic, is a mid-19th century North American architectural style of Gothic Revival applied predominantly to wood domestic buildings and small churches. American architects adopted gothic detailing which was typically masonry into wood frame construction resulting in a decorative quality that is purely American.¹ Most Carpenter Gothic churches tend to use simple lines and elements and be relatively unadorned, retaining only the basic elements of pointed cathedral-style arch windows, steep pitched roofs, cross gables, wood trim, and strong vertical elements adapted to American light frame construction. Other characteristics are carved porch posts and railings, horizontal board and batten siding, and repetitive jigsaw wood ornamentation made with a steam-powered scroll saw. Local builders would often improvise using Victorian gothic features to emphasize charm and quaintness.² While many carpenter gothic churches were built in California, very few exist today.

The subject property's asymmetrical front façade steeply-pitched gabled roof with an asymmetrical cross gable, bargeboard eaves, lancet windows with hooded gables are typical of carpenter gothic architecture. The interior of the building is finished with tongue and groove narrow wood paneling set at oblique diagonals forming a herringbone pattern. Roof and post supports have chamfered corners, both characteristic of the carpenter gothic style. The east and west additions, as well as the newer loft, are not historic.

Integrity

WildCare retains much of its integrity with the exception of location and setting. It was moved twice and sold to another organization. It has few modifications and retains its integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. It is used in a similar manner as its original use as a meeting space.

COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

¹ Gerald Foster, *American Houses, A Field Guide*, Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004

² John C. S. Poppeliers, *What Style Is It? A Guide to American Architecture* (Washington D.C. The Preservation Press, 1983)

Under the California Environmental Quality Act, Section 21084.1 Historical Resources Guidelines, “A project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment”. For purposes of this section, an historical resource is a resource listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in, the “California Register of Historical Resources”.

For purposes of CEQA a project which “follows the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings or the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (1995), Weeks and Grimmer, shall be considered as mitigated to a level of less than a significant impact on the historical resource”. “The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation...” was developed to guide work on historic buildings and as a standard for evaluation. The intent is preservation of a property’s significance through the retention of historic materials and features. An important step in this process is the identification of a resource’s defining architectural elements or “character defining features”. Character defining features are those physical characteristics that convey its historic significance. In practice, compliance with the “Standards” is an act of balancing the overall project and not retaining every feature. However, it is important to retain enough of the historic features for the project to retain its historic significance.



Front Elevation



Ceiling Interior

Character Defining Features

Retention of the features listed below is important for compliance with the Secretary of the Interior Standards.

- a. Configuration of original wood frame building.
- b. Steeply-pitched gabled roof with an asymmetrical cross gable. The gable ends have scalloped bargeboard eaves. *The roof has been replaced and is not character defining.*
Front or North Elevation
- c. Main entry: arched clerestory and chamfered trim remain. *Wood door has been replaced and is not character defining. Gable roof above main entry is no longer extant.*

- d. Vertical double rectangular window divided into three lights with chamfered wood trim in the gable end. *Double vertical windows were added at a later date and are not character defining.*
- e. To the right of the door are double lancet windows shaded by a hooded gable with decorative bargeboard.
- f. Two small gable shaped vents just below the ridge.

Rear or south elevation

- g. Simplified bargeboard in gable end.
- h. Smaller rectangular window with chamfered trim in the cross gable end. *Double vertical windows in the upper gable end were added at a later date and are not character defining.*
- i. Two sets of double lancet windows shaded by a hooded gable with decorative bargeboard on the rear elevation. *One of these pairs of windows was removed and filled in at some point in time but the hooded gable remains.*

Interior

- j. Tongue and groove old growth narrow redwood paneling set at oblique diagonals forming a herringbone pattern on both walls and ceiling.
- k. Exposed framing with chamfered corners.
- l. Angled wainscot band that appears to wrap the space. *Most of the walls have been furred out with drywall. Drywall is not character defining.*
- m. Original wood floor.
- n. Ceiling is supported by two large scissor trusses with a bottom rounded member with a slight point.
- o. Any remaining original finishes, if discovered.

Elements below are not character defining and therefore not historic.

The additions to the east and west as well as the loft addition are not historic. The windows in the upper gable and the pointed arch doors below the loft were added at a later date and are not historic. It appears that the arched wall on the east end of the interior space may have been infilled with tongue and groove paneling set at oblique diagonals to match the original. Doors throughout have been replaced.

DESIGN REVIEW

The proposed project for 76 Albert Park Lane is to build new facilities on WildCare's existing site which will allow for a more functional space providing for the needs of the organization, rehabilitating wildlife and the community. Design documents prepared by Fairchild Brohms Design dated July 25, 2022 were reviewed for purposes of this report. The proposed 11,405 sf. project on a 15,085 sf. site along a creek with a bridge providing access from the street to the property. The project consists of a three story building wrapping the original parish hall on two sides. There will be a usable courtyard on the west side of the site and a usable rooftop with caging areas. The parish hall is currently hidden behind additions on the east and west sides. The rear of the building is visible, however the front is partially obscured by multiple cages. All additions to the parish hall including the loft space and miscellaneous small buildings will be removed. The

parish hall will be rehabilitated in compliance with the “Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation” and will serve as the meeting / multi-use room for WildCare.

The project scope consists of retention and rehabilitation of the parish hall, which will be moved to the front of the site along the creek and accessed by a small bridge. The new adjacent building has been carefully designed to avoid impacting view corridors of the historic building from the street. The historic building has been moved to the front of the site to increase its visibility. This building has been moved multiple times throughout its history and therefore does not affect its historic significance. The new building will be pulled forward one foot on the east side of the building to allow for toilet rooms and signage. To the east of this is a storefront which will become the new entry. The new building’s materials include concrete block, glass storefront and perforated metal. These materials have been chosen to contrast with the historic building. The historic building will have the non-historic stucco removed, and lap siding added over rigid insulation adding to this visual distinction.

The new building wraps the historic building on both the north (rear) elevation and the east elevation. It is attached to the building minimally on the main floor with an open courtyard on the rear at the location of the double lancet window. The building steps back twelve feet at the second floor to avoid encroaching on the form of the historic buildings roof structure. This will also give the appearance of an adjacent separate structure from the historic building within the urban fabric and allow for the retention of its integrity and identity. Due to the height of the historic roof, the new structure behind the historic building will be minimally visible from the street.

The historic building’s interior character defining features will be retained with the exception of a small window which will be removed to allow for an accessible door to the new building. There will also be a new storefront added into the west elevation to allow for a visual connection to the new courtyard. On the east end non-original paneling will be removed to allow for an arched double height opening into the new lobby. All wood narrow paneling will be retained and reuse for repairs wherever possible.

Character Defining Features

#	Character Defining Feature	Scope of Work	Comments
a	Configuration of original wood frame building.	Existing configuration will be retained.	Work as described conforms to the “Standards”.
b	Steeply-pitched gabled roof with an asymmetrical cross gable.	Retain and repair as required.	Work as described conforms to the “Standards”.
b&g	Scalloped and simple bargeboard eaves.	Retain and repair as required.	Work as described conforms to the “Standards”.
d	Main entry: arched clerestory and chamfered trim.	Retain and repair as required. ADA compliant new door to replace existing non-historic door. Previously removed hooded gable to be replaced to match original.	Work as described conforms to the “Standards”.
c	Vertical double rectangular window divided into three lights	Retain and repair as required.	Work as described conforms to the “Standards”.

	with chamfered wood trim in the gable end.		
e&i	Double lancet windows shaded by a hooded gable with decorative bargeboard. (2 existing)	Retain and repair as required. Missing lancet window to be replaced to match original on rear elev.	Work as described conforms to the “Standards” Courtyard of addition to retain light and air @ lancet windows.
f	Two small gable shaped vents just below the ridge.	Retain and repair as required.	Work as described conforms to the “Standards”.
h	Smaller rectangular window with chamfered trim in the cross gable end.	Door to new building to be added in this approximate location. Window will not be retained.	Work as described conforms to the “Standards”.
j	Tongue and groove narrow paneling set at oblique diagonals forming a herringbone pattern on both walls and ceiling.	Retain and repair as required. Tongue and groove paneling to be removed at location of new storefront providing visual connection to the courtyard.	Work as described conforms to the “Standards”. Tongue and groove paneling will be carefully removed and retained for replacement where needed.
k	Exposed framing with chamfered corners.	Retain and repair as required.	Work as described conforms to the “Standards”.
l	Angled wainscot band that appears to wrap the space.	Retain and repair as required.	Work as described conforms to the “Standards”.
m	Wood floor.	Retain and repair as required.	Work as described conforms to the “Standards”.
n	Ceiling is supported by two large scissor trusses with a bottom rounded member with a slight point.	Retain and repair as required.	Work as described conforms to the “Standards”.

CONCLUSION

VNA reviewed the proposed current design and determined that it is in conformance with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation. This determination is based on design documents prepared by Fairchild Brohms Design dated July 25, 2022. This project preserves significant historic materials and features, preserves the building’s historic character and protects its historic significance by making a visual distinction between old and new. The new building will be stepped back from the historic structure maintaining the size, scale, and character of the original historic structure. While it changes the buildings setting it does not “*cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historic resource*”. Therefore, there is no significant adverse impact on the historic resource as defined by CEQA.

Listed below are the ten “Standards” and a brief description of the method of conformance.

“1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment”. This building’s original use was a meeting space and will continue to serve this purpose. The new project will retain its character defining and historic interior and exterior. Therefore, the proposed project will minimally change the defining characteristics of the building, its site and environment. The existing neighborhood

is currently a multi-residential neighborhood with buildings varying in size from single to multi-story residences.

“2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided”. All existing historic materials will be retained. Roof configuration, decorative wood elements, and windows will be retained and repaired. Any deteriorated elements will be replaced to match existing. Small window on the rear elevation will be removed to allow for a connection to the new building with an ADA compliant door. Wood paneling in location of new storefront to be retained and reused as appropriate. See item #6 *Dangers of Abrasive Cleaning to Historic Buildings*.

“3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken”. The original building will be retained. New building will be identifiable as a completely new structure maintaining the existing buildings historic integrity.

“4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved”. Not Applicable / The existing additions are not of the same architectural quality of the original structure and have not acquired historic significance. Period of significance is 1879.

“5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved”. All existing historic materials will be retained with minimal exceptions, i.e. paneling in location of new storefront will be reused where necessary. Wood decorative elements and finishes will be retained and repaired, and all original windows will be retained and repaired with the exception of the small window on the rear of the building. Missing lancet window will be restored and the missing main entry gable rebuilt.

“6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence”. All existing historic materials will be retained and repaired. Wood finishes and wood decorative elements will be repaired. All original doors and windows will be repaired. (See Preservation Brief # 9 *The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows*).

“7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible”. Cleaning of the surfaces will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible including testing of methods in an inconspicuous location. Method and test area will be reviewed by historic architect.

“8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken”. Archeological resources are not expected to be encountered. If so, appropriate measures will be taken with approval of the historic architect and City staff.

“9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the

massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment”. The new project is clearly identifiable as new and compatible with the original building. The new building is designed to be viewed as a separate adjacent building. It is stepped back from the original structure on the north and east elevations. (See Preservation Brief #14 *New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings: Preservation Concerns*).

“10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired”. New addition is on the rear of the building and adjacent the existing building where an earlier addition exists. Removal of the new project will not impair the original building. (See Preservation Brief #14 *New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings: Preservation Concerns*).

Continued Review

Compliance with the Secretary of Interior’s Standards will be accomplished through design development meetings and reviews of design and construction documents and specifications related to the historic building by the HP Consultant, at appropriate milestones. Architect will review all applicable Preservation Briefs prepared by the National Park Service’s Preservation Assistance Division. Cleaning and repair of existing historic fabric will also be reviewed. All lighting and signage will be reviewed at a later date.

On site construction monitoring by HP Consultant will be undertaken throughout the discovery and construction phase to ensure protection of historic fabric and compliance with the “Standards” and approved Design and Construction Documents. In addition, all submittals, mock-ups and change orders that affect historic fabric will be undertaken in consultation with the HP Consultant. HP Consultant, Design Team, and Construction Management will work cooperatively and diligently to resolve issues in a timely manner.

A Historic Record shall be made of the changes which affect historic fabric. These changes shall be documented by photographs. Documentation of conditions before, during, and after construction shall be prepared for all areas where demolition, removal and/or installation occurs which affect historic fabric. Photo-documentation to be reviewed by Historic Preservation Consultant.

Applicable Preservation Briefs include:

Preservation Brief #6 *Dangers of Abrasive Cleaning to Historic Buildings*.

Preservation Brief #10 *Exterior Paint Problems on Historic Woodwork*,

Preservation Brief # 9 *The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows*

Preservation Brief #14 *New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings: Preservation Concerns*.