

PAUL DUCHSCHERER

HISTORICAL INTERIOR DESIGNER AND HISTORIAN

September 8, 2006

Gloria Sciara, Project Manager
City of Santa Clara, Planning Division
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Dear Ms. Sciara:

As an author and expert on historical American architecture, interiors, and landscapes/gardens of the 19th and early 20th centuries, I wish to express my opinion about the future fate of BAREC. I feel it is important that BAREC, the former UC Agricultural Research Center on Winchester in Santa Clara, should be included in both the State and National Historical Registries. I believe that this ensemble of site and buildings, when considered with its past uses, has notable historical importance. The structures in particular represent excellent examples of well-designed, solidly constructed period buildings that have survived in remarkably sound condition. Although the structures were built 20 years apart, it is apparent that an effort was made to ensure a harmonious design relationship between them. For example, their roof designs bear close comparison. These reflect characteristic forms seen in other similarly scaled structures (both residential and commercial examples) built in the same period, and show an influence of the early 20th century Arts and Crafts Movement. Additionally, the BAREC site has had three unique and important historical usages since the 1880s: as a Home for Feebleminded Children, as a Home for Civil War Veterans, and as an agricultural research center.

It is notable that BAREC is centered between the National Historical Registered Winchester House, and the State Historical Registered Santa Clara Mission. Both of those sites, in their most important historical periods, were surrounded by farmland. Since neither site has managed to survive with its original agricultural setting intact, it is especially important to consider that BAREC represents what those two important sites have lost: farmland. Because the BAREC site existed in the 1800s, at the same time when those two other historical sites were in their prime, all three sites therefore share an important contextual link, and in this sense, their collective historical meaning is further enhanced. Among others, this factor will be invaluable in helping to ensure a greater sense of understanding and appreciation of the region's richly diverse history for future generations. This opportunity will not occur ever again.

For your further information, the following represents some of my expertise and experience: I am the author of several books about historic architecture and design, including *The Bungalow: America's Arts & Crafts Home* (1995), *Inside the Bungalow: America's Arts & Crafts Interior* (1997), *Outside the Bungalow: America's Arts & Crafts Garden* (1999), and *Victorian Glory in San Francisco and the Bay Area* (2001), all published by Penguin Putnam Inc. (I have also written other books on related topics for Pomegranate and Gibbs Smith publishers). In 1975, I graduated from the Rudolph Schaeffer School of Design. In my work as a design consultant, I have professional experience in both commercial and residential interiors.

With an extensive working knowledge of the history of architecture, interior design and decorative arts, I specialize in period-style projects, and work mostly with historic buildings. Examples of my design work, especially projects featuring ornamental ceiling designs, have been widely published. As an avid proponent of historic preservation, I also have working experience as a teacher and lecturer, and have written widely for related periodicals about aspects of historic architecture and design. I have also appeared on various television programs (including the PBS series "This Old House"), and have most often been featured as a guest designer on HGTV's popular "Curb Appeal" series.

I appreciate this opportunity to be able to express my opinion about the future of the BAREC site, which I truly believe is of great importance in the effort to preserve what remains of the Bay Area's vanishing heritage. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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