

North Beach, San Francisco Historic Context Statement



Prepared for
Northeast San Francisco Conservancy

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31 January 2018
(with revisions as of 8 October 2020)



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I. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

PROJECT PURPOSE

This report updates and supplements the historic context statement contained in the 2-volume report titled “North Beach San Francisco: An Architectural, Historical Cultural Survey,” completed in 1982 (the “North Beach Survey”), which was officially adopted by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in 1999 as the City’s comprehensive record of historical and architectural resources in the North Beach neighborhood.

Building upon the existing North Beach Survey, the purpose of this project is to provide an updated historic context for further evaluating historic resources in San Francisco’s North Beach neighborhood. Preparation of this report follows guidelines of the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) available in December 2017 on the OHP website in two documents: “Writing Historic Contexts” by Marie Nelson and “OHP Preferred Format for Historic Context Statements.” These expand on a 1999 OHP “Suggested Outline for Fully Developed Context Statement.” The report has been edited in response to comments from the San Francisco Planning Department based on the department’s interpretation of the OHP guidelines for Historic Context Statements.

These OHP guidelines are derived from federal guidelines of the National Park Service (NPS) including National Register Bulletin 16B, *How to Complete the National Register Property Documentation Form* (1999, NPS website 2017) and the Secretary of the Interior’s *Standards and Guidelines for Preservation Planning* (Federal Register 29 September 1983).

This historic context statement will be submitted to the OHP and to the San Francisco Historic Preservation Commission to further guide the evaluation of historic resources subject to project review and in other planning and preservation efforts. The following definition and discussion of historic contexts is contained within Standard 1 of the Secretary of the Interior’s *Standards and Guidelines for Preservation Planning*:

Decisions about the identification, evaluation, registration and treatment of historic properties are most reliably made when the relationship of individual properties to other similar properties is understood. Information about historic properties representing aspects of history, architecture, archeology, engineering and culture must be collected and organized to define these relationships. This organizational framework is called a “historic context.” The historic context organizes information based on a cultural theme and its geographical and chronological limits. Contexts describe the significant broad patterns of development in an area that may be represented by historic properties. The development of historic contexts is the foundation for decisions about identification, evaluation, registration and treatment of historic properties.

PROJECT HISTORY AND PERSONNEL

This historic context statement has been prepared as part of an on-going effort to survey the North Beach neighborhood for historic preservation purposes. From the beginning, these efforts have been led by private nonprofit organizations, with the assistance of paid professional consultants and volunteers.

The initial survey work, which resulted in the completion of the North Beach Survey in 1982, was led by the North Beach Historical Project, Inc. A product of a federal grant pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the survey was carried out under a formal contract with the California State Office of Historic Preservation (“OHP”) and, as such, produced survey findings meeting both state and federal guidelines established by the OHP and the National Park Service.

Anne Bloomfield, architectural historian, defined a survey area, conducted a field survey, and wrote a historic context statement with Jean Kortum and Nancy Olmsted. Randolph Delehanty identified high-priority survey areas and Daniel Warner conducted the field survey with Bloomfield. Michael Nelson was a paid photographer. Major volunteers also included Lisa Bagnatori, Italian Welfare Agency; Philip Choy, Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board; Andrew Canepa, Italian Trade Commission; Deanna Paoli Gumina, author; Margaret Price; and Michael Corbett. Max Kirkeberg, Professor of Geography at San Francisco State University and his class of 13 students also participated.

The final survey results were reviewed and approved by OHP. Buildings recorded in this survey were included in the California Historical Resources Inventory System (CHRIS), the official compilation of all identified and evaluated historic resources in California. Of approximately 1,100 buildings and other historic resources in the area, four districts and 212 individual buildings and resources were identified as significant. (See Appendix B: Listed Resources - 1982 North Beach Survey.)

Beginning in 1998, efforts to update and expand upon the original survey were first led by the Telegraph Hill Dwellers with the sponsorship of San Francisco Architectural Heritage, and currently by the Northeast San Francisco Conservancy (NESFC). During the period from 1998 to 1999, the survey area was expanded under the leadership of Anne Bloomfield, with a grant from San Francisco Beautiful and the assistance of numerous volunteers. Photographs were taken by Leo McLaughlin, Sherry O'Donnell, June Osterberg, and Howard Wong. Major volunteers also included Nan Roth, Nancy Shanahan, Ross Tibbits, Termeh Dimi Yeghiazarian, Patricia Cady, Vincent Marsh and Judith Powell. Field survey of properties in the expanded survey area was conducted by the following historic preservation professionals: Alice Carey, Paul Fisher, Nancy Goldenberg, Hisashi Sugaya, William Kostura, Susan Snyder, Vincent Marsh, Christopher Ver Planck, and Michael Corbett. This phase ended when Anne Bloomfield died in 1999.

Beginning in 2004, Michael Corbett, architectural historian, expanded and revised the historic context statement pursuant to the current guidelines of the OHP and to take advantage of new research and new information generated by the earlier phases of the survey. This historic context statement is the culmination of that effort and the foundation for going forward with the survey of North Beach. Boundaries of the survey area have been clarified and expanded — today there are approximately 1,800 individual buildings in the survey area. In this phase, Gary Goss was a project researcher. Significant volunteer work was conducted by Termeh Yeghiazarian, Ellen McElhinny, Katherine Petrin, Judith Powell and Nancy Shanahan. Photos were provided by Caren Zisson, Judith Powell, Nancy Shanahan, John Corbett, and Dennis Hearne.

Drafts of this historic context statement were submitted to the San Francisco Planning Department in April 2014 and in January 2018. In response to comments provided by the Department following each draft, substantial additions and edits were made by NESFC and reviewed by Michael Corbett. In 2019, Katherine Petrin and Shayne Watson, architectural historians, conducted field work to evaluate the integrity and update the status of each property within the survey area to verify whether each property is a contributing resource to a potential historic district or is an individually eligible resource. The detailed results of this field work will be submitted separately to the Department. A revised final draft historic context statement was submitted on October 8, 2020.

This context statement has been enhanced by other historic context statements, including: San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design 1935-1970 (Brown 2011); Citywide Historic Context Statement for LGBTQ History in San Francisco (Graves and Watson 2015); Neighborhood Commercial Buildings, 1865-1965, Historic Context Statement (Brown and Parks 2016); Corbett Heights, San Francisco (Western part of Eureka Valley) Historic Context Statement (Corbett 2017); and the Draft San Francisco Latino Historic Context Statement (Cardova and Lammers 2018). The Modern Architecture and LGBTQ reports

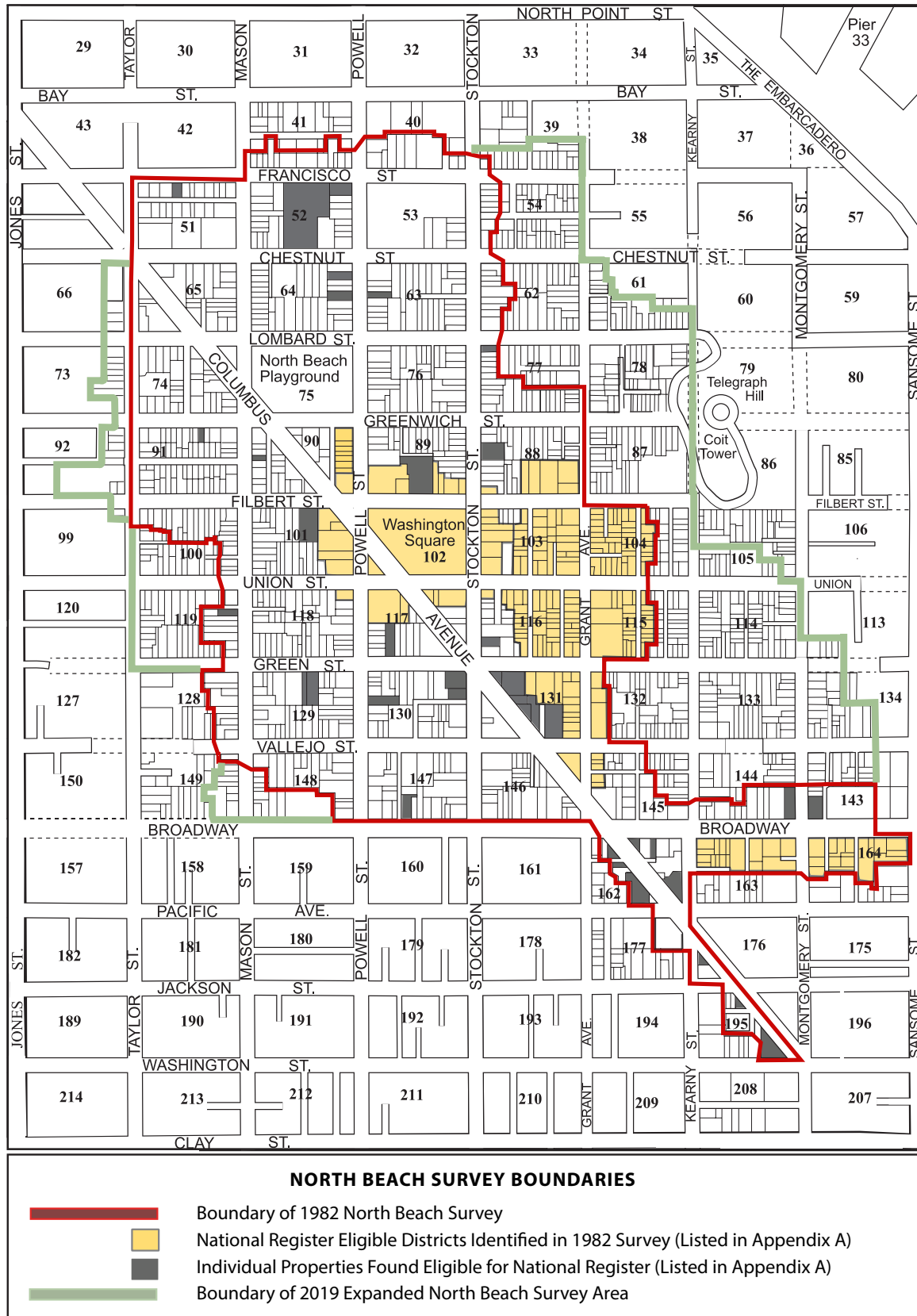


FIGURE 1. Map of Survey Boundaries

have widespread application to North Beach and are referenced as whole documents. In the Corbett Heights report, sections on infrastructure, property types, and alterations and integrity considerations provided specifics for North Beach. In addressing infrastructure, Adrian VerHagen and Bruce Storrs, County Surveyors in the Bureau of Street Use and Mapping in the Department of Public Works, provided helpful information and reviewed the draft text concerned with City Monuments.

BOUNDARIES

For the purposes of this study, North Beach has been defined generally as the area between Telegraph Hill and Russian Hill, south of the north side of Francisco Street, and north of Broadway except for the south side of Broadway east of Columbus Avenue and Columbus Avenue south to Washington Street.

The boundaries have been drawn to stop at the Telegraph Hill Historic District on the east, to proposed survey areas for Russian Hill on the west, to the Chinatown Historic District (identified in the Chinatown Historic Survey) on the southwest of Columbus, to the Jackson Square Historic District on the southeast of Columbus, and to the non-residential, formerly industrial area north of Francisco Street on the north.

The map above (**Figure 1**) shows the boundaries of the 1982 North Beach Survey, including the boundaries of the four districts and individual properties listed in the CHRIS, together with the boundaries of the expanded study area for this historic context statement.

FUNDING

Funding for this project has come from various sources. The initial survey was funded by a federal grant through the National Historic Preservation Act under agreement with the California Office of Historic Preservation. The efforts to update and expand upon the original survey were funded by grants from San Francisco Beautiful's Friedel Klussman Grants Program, the Bland Family Foundation, and from private contributions.

METHODS

The starting point for this context statement is in the work of the 2-volume report titled "North Beach San Francisco: An Architectural, Historical Cultural Survey," prepared by Anne Bloomfield, Jean Kortum, and Nancy Olmsted in 1982 and the draft "Cultural Heritage Survey Update, North Beach, San Francisco, California" prepared by Anne Bloomfield in 1999. These reports have been substantially expanded based on additional historical research and on the experience of the field survey.

As a part of the work for this revised context statement, the team created a sortable database on every property in the study area. This extensive database is a detailed resource for understanding the buildings, history, and architecture of the area that has been an essential tool in developing this study. In addition, Termeh Dimi Yeghiazarian assembled data from the 1910, 1920, and 1930 census records of North Beach. Together these made it possible to analyze vast amounts of information from census records and building permit or contract sources. Both databases are substantial products of the combined effort to prepare a historic context statement and expand the survey that should be useful in the future.

Conventional historical sources that have been of particular value are Deanna Paoli Gumina *The Italians of San Francisco, 1850-1930* (1978), Richard Dillon *North Beach: The Italian Heart of San Francisco* (1985), David Myrick *San Francisco's Telegraph Hill* (2001), Ellen McElhinny "Mapping Ethnic Change in North Beach" (1995), Bill Morgan *The Beat Generation in San Francisco, A Literary Tour* (2003), and Dino Cinel

From Italy to San Francisco: The Immigrant Experience (1982).²

In the long course of this project, other essential historical sources that were previously cumbersome or impossible to use efficiently have become remarkably easy through digitization and online availability. Through ancestry.com (census, voter records, military records, ships passenger lists, etc.), newspaperarchive.com, the San Francisco Public Library (Sanborn Insurance maps, historic photos, *San Francisco Chronicle* 1865-1922, etc.), internetarchive.com (San Francisco directories, *California Architect and Building News*), Library of Congress (*San Francisco Call* 1890-1913), the *New York Times*, Google search, Google books, online catalogs of many libraries, and other sources that seem to come available almost every day, there has been a revolution in research that was barely begun at the beginning of this project and that was nonexistent during phases one and two.

On close examination, one well-known source, D. H. Burnham assisted by Edward H. Bennett *Report on a Plan for San Francisco* (1905) yielded rich insights about elite attitudes toward North Beach in the era when it was destroyed and rebuilt.

Among all these sources, perhaps the single most important was the 1913 report of the Russell Sage Foundation of New York, *San Francisco Relief Survey: The Organization and Method of Relief After the Earthquake and Fire of April 18, 1906*. This report and sources it opened up including city and state laws, identify social realities about the population of North Beach that have been neglected elsewhere in writing about the neighborhood, and tell the story of the reconstruction of North Beach with public and private assistance including the three categories of buildings that were a major part of the rebuilt neighborhood.

Another type of source came to light in the summer and fall of 2011 — blueprints of architectural plans that were originally filed at the San Francisco Building Department to accompany building permit applications. After these blueprints were copied on microfiche in the 1970s, the originals were salvaged in a volunteer effort. Those for the best-known buildings went to the History Center at the San Francisco Public Library. The majority went to the Environmental Design Archives at the University of California at Berkeley. This very large number of uncounted drawings was moved to an off-campus storage site where they lay uncataloged and inaccessible for twenty-five years. When the Environmental Design Archives lost the storage space, a second salvage effort was undertaken, resulting in the donation of many blueprints of typical North Beach buildings — flats, hotels, apartments, stores, and others — to the survey effort. These drawings are an invaluable resource for understanding the architecture of North Beach in both its physical and social dimensions. For instance, plans of flats prepared during different revisions of the building law, especially from 1907 to 1912, show a rich variation in interior accommodations and amenities in buildings that look identical from the street.

While this context statement tells a more complex story than was possible even a few years ago because of new sources that have come to light and because of online access to old familiar sources, there are still important sources that have not been addressed. The first and most urgent of these is the always vanishing generation of old people who remember how things were and why they were done. The Telegraph Hill Dwellers' oral history project has produced a rich collection of oral histories of North Beach (Overmire 2009). This historic context raises many new questions that can only be answered by a review of these oral histories and an ongoing oral history program. Second, a review of the various community newspapers and other publications, notably *L'Italia* and *La Voce del Popolo*, would answer many new questions raised by this context statement. These sources have been neglected so far, not because they are unimportant, but simply due to a lack of resources and Italian speakers involved in the project.

²The usefulness of Cinel's book is diminished by revelations that he fabricated sources and overstated his case for the influence of regionalism among San Francisco Italians. See Sebastian Fichera, "The Disturbing Case of Dino Cinel," George Mason University's History News Network, 28 April 2003. www.hnn.us.

II. INTRODUCTION TO HISTORIC CONTEXTS

NORTH BEACH: NAME AND LOCATION

The name, North Beach, and the boundaries of the neighborhood now identified by that name each have a long variable history. The district has been called by other names and its names have sometimes referred to somewhat different areas.

At the time of the Gold Rush, “North Beach” was the name of a section of the shoreline of San Francisco Bay at the north edge of the city. This sandy strip of the waterfront meandered east and west almost one and three-eighths miles between North Point near the present-day corner of Kearny and Bay streets and Point San Jose, later Black Point in Fort Mason. In 1847, the new grid of the city was extended into the water beyond the shoreline of North Beach so that water lots could be sold. From the 1850s to the 1890s North Beach itself was gradually obliterated by maritime facilities, industrial development, and construction of the seawall with land fill behind it. (Dow 1973: 62-63) (**Figure 2**)



FIGURE 2. View of North Beach from Black's Point, 1852.
Courtesy of the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

Beginning with Henry Meiggs who built Meiggs' Wharf into the bay between Powell and Mason streets in 1853, several property owners and others envisioned a major industrial development of the waterfront along North Beach. A cluster of businesses on and around Meiggs' Wharf, the Pioneer Woolen Mill of 1858, and the Selby Smelting and Lead Company of 1865 were the principle early developments. These businesses generated a demand for housing, resulting in the development of a residential neighborhood south of the north waterfront in the north end of the area between Telegraph and Russian Hills. Photographs from the mid 1860s show freestanding houses, row houses, and larger buildings that may have been hotels and lodging houses in this area. (Baccari 2006: 17-23) (**Figure 3**)



FIGURE 3. North Beach, 1865. Society of California Pioneers (#107).

The shoreline assumed its present form from 1878 to 1893 when sections of the seawall were built across the shallow area of the Bay off of North Beach. Section 1 from Stockton to Kearny was built in 1878-1879, Section A between Powell and Stockton was built in 1879-1880, and Section B between Powell and Taylor was built in 1890-1893 (BSHC 1894: 19). When the area between the old beach and the new seawall was filled, North Beach itself ceased to exist east of Taylor Street; it survived to the west until 1935 when Aquatic Park was built, creating a new man-made beach north of the original shoreline. (**Figure 4**)

According to a historian of the Italians in San Francisco, the name North Beach was first used for this new residential neighborhood in the 1860s: “Because this area was . . . close by a public bathing beach called North Beach, the district itself although removed from the beach became known as North Beach in the early ‘sixties,’ and has retained this name ever since.” (Dondero 1953: 39). A search of newspapers and other early histories did not find any examples of the use of “North Beach” for the neighborhood until 1874, when an *Oakland Tribune* article on San Francisco churches referred to “a Congregational Church in the North Beach part of this metropolis.” (*Oakland Tribune* 1874). This was the Fourth Congregational Church of San Francisco at the corner of Green and Stockton streets (Myrick 2001: 162), many blocks south of the north waterfront.

In 1893 the *San Francisco Call* discussed the term: “Many persons included in the term ‘North Beach’ all that portion of the city north of Union Street between the two points” — the foot of Dupont Street (now Grant Avenue) and Black Point (Fort Mason). (*San Francisco Call*, 23 April 1893). The meaning of “North Beach” was sometimes confused by its continuing usage for at least twenty years after the beach had disappeared to refer to the north waterfront in its new location. (*San Francisco Call*, 8 July 1907; Edwards 1914: 76)



FIGURE 4. North Beach, ca. 1891.
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library (AAB-9635).

Although some called the area North Beach, others called it by other names with divergent associations, often referring to more limited or somewhat different areas. In the 1850s, portions of the area along Broadway and on nearby blocks, especially on the north side, were called Sydney Town and Chile Town; Montgomery Street was Dago Town. (Bancroft 1888: 170-184; Dillon 1985: 25, 33) “By the late 1850s the community of DuPont Street was known as Little Italy.” (Cinel 1982: 104) From the 1860s to 1880s, Telegraph Hill, where it was cheap to live, was Little Italy (Dillon 1985: 31) and the lower areas of the future North Beach neighborhood were occupied by Spanish, French, Mexican, Italian, Basque, Swiss, Chilean, and Peruvian people, often in their own enclaves abutting one another. “Within a few years Romance languages dominated the district, where the Latin culture clearly set off the area from the rest of the city.” (Cinel 1982: 103) Later, there were also Portuguese in the neighborhood. (Edwards 1914: 66)

While Little Italy referred to a portion of the future North Beach neighborhood that included Telegraph Hill, another term appears to have applied to a wider area encompassing all of the Romance language groups. In 1890, the *San Francisco Chronicle* referred to the “Latin Quarter” as the neighborhood from which children came to the North Cosmopolitan school on Filbert near Jones Street. Many of these children had “Italian, Spanish, Mexican, French, and German parents.” (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 23 February 1890) In 1892, the *New York Times* referred to “the Latin quarter” in an article on preventing cholera in Chinatown. A search of newspapers from indexes and online sources (California State Library n.d.; California State Library 1904-1950; *New York Times* 1851-1980; *San Francisco Call* 1900-1910; *San Francisco Chronicle* 1865-1922; and newspaper archive.com) as well as early histories and guides to San Francisco (Soule 1966 [1855]; Lloyd 1876; Hittell 1878; Doxey 1881; and Bancroft 1888-1890) did not turn up any earlier uses of the term “Latin Quarter” in San Francisco. In the late nineteenth century, California newspapers commonly used the term to refer to the Left Bank in Paris.

The earliest known discussion of the Latin Quarter was in an 1897 article in *The Wave* by Frank Norris. Curiously, Norris refers to the Quarter and to Latins but never puts the two words together. He describes the district as an “aggregation of ‘little’ Mexico, Italy and the like that makes a place for itself in San

Francisco . . . on the other side of Chinatown and beyond the Barbary Coast.” (Norris 1931: 136)

Use of the term Latin Quarter may have been at its peak in the early 1900s. In the April issue of *Overland Monthly*, the last issue before the 1906 earthquake, J. M. Scanland wrote: “There is not a more picturesque spot in California, so noted for its odd corners and medley of nationalities, than the Latin Quarter of San Francisco. Here live the Latins of all States, and subdivisions of States — each nationality separated by a divisional line, unmarked yet distinct.” Throughout the neighborhood, he wrote, “Most of the States have different dialects, and the dialects of the subdivisions of a State are different,” but they all listened to the Opera in the Tuscan dialect. (Scanland 1906: 327)

At times, the name Telegraph Hill seems to have encompassed the entire North Beach neighborhood, perhaps a consequence of the early settlement of Italians on Telegraph Hill followed by the gradual nineteenth-century movement of the center of the Italian population from the upper parts of Telegraph Hill to DuPont Street (now Grant Avenue) and Washington Square. It may also be because Telegraph Hill doesn’t have a shopping district other than what is down the hill in North Beach. Writing in recent decades about Telegraph Hill, David Myrick said, “The boundaries of Telegraph Hill cannot be defined exactly.” For him, Sansome Street is the eastern boundary: “A line just above the entertainment zone on Broadway will serve as the southern edge, while Columbus Avenue and Stockton Street form the western limit, although some people residing as far west as Powell or Mason streets think of themselves as living on Telegraph Hill. Francisco Street now forms the northern boundary of the Hill.” (Myrick 2001: 9, 11)

The term “North Beach” was used in the *San Francisco Chronicle* to refer to a neighborhood in the early 1880s, but the neighborhood referred to appears to have been limited to the few blocks south of the waterfront. An 1881 article on “The Real Estate Market” of San Francisco mentioned numerous properties, all north of Lombard Street. (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 18 November 1881) The earliest known unambiguous use of “North Beach” to refer to a larger neighborhood that included at the least the area north of Broadway and between Russian and Telegraph hills was in 1892 in an article about an event at the Morrow Club at 638 Union Street. (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 17 April 1892)

In the period after the 1906 earthquake and fire, the terms North Beach, Latin Quarter, Little Italy, and even Telegraph Hill were used almost interchangeably. Then, all but North Beach generally dropped out of use for the area as a whole. As it became more expensive, the Italians moved down Telegraph Hill; and as Bohemians first moved up in the 1920s, followed by prosperous elements of the general population of the city who wanted the views, “Telegraph Hill” came to refer to the upper parts of the hill and to its east side while “North Beach” referred to the area between Russian and Telegraph hills, not including the upper parts.

Richard Dillon said that “the Latin Quarter . . . died in the fire of 1906,” succeeded by an overwhelmingly Italian population. (Dillon 1985: 162) Cinel took a different view, quoting an Italian observer in 1911: “Even North Beach which is popularly known as the Latin Quarter, is hardly an Italian enclave.” (Cinel 1982: 111) By 1920, however, the Italians unquestionably dominated the neighborhood. This situation lasted through World War II after which the Italians began moving out and the Chinese, Bohemians, and others moved in; “the term Little Italy no longer made sense after World War II.” (Dillon 1985: 174)

In 1925, a North Beach businessman suggested changing the name of the neighborhood. Dr. V. C. Quartararo, secretary of the North Beach Merchants’ Association was quoted in the *Chronicle*:

There is everything in a name. The North Beach has outgrown its name, and no longer is the district confined to the little beach as it was years ago.

In recent years the public has gained the wrong impression of the North Beach section, and many people think there are no stores or business houses there. In its true character, the district is an important part of the city.

The name “Columbia Valley” would be particularly appropriate, as the district is and always will be populated by people of the Latin race and also because each year the landing scene of the great Columbus Day fete is held on the beach.

Nothing came of this suggestion.

With its different names and its movements of populations, the boundaries of the North Beach neighborhood have always been hard to define, especially in relation to Telegraph Hill. (Dillon 1985: 32; Myrick 2001: 10) Many have said that North Beach was north of the Barbary Coast and Chinatown, and in fact that the stability of these two districts contributed to the northward growth of Little Italy. (Dillon 1985: 51) Thus, North Beach extends north from Broadway except for a panhandle down Columbus Avenue to its beginning at Washington Street. (Dillon 1985: 13)

Insofar as North Beach has been an Italian neighborhood, at its maximum extent it encompassed all that area predominantly occupied by Italians and their businesses. Richard Dillon took this approach in defining Little Italy as having three principle parts: Telegraph Hill, North Beach, and Fisherman’s Wharf with “the district satellites” of Italian population in areas of the Potrero, Mission, and Portola districts. (Dillon 1985: 147)

The core of Little Italy could be thought of as including those places frequented on a daily basis by many Italians for work or personal business. Thus, it extended down Columbus Avenue as far as the Bank of Italy at the corner of Montgomery and Clay and the Italian-American Bank at the corner of Montgomery and Sacramento. It extended to the produce market (now generally the site of Golden Gateway Center) where many Italians worked as venders or commission merchants; and at the other end of North Beach to Fisherman’s Wharf, itself sometimes called Italy Harbor (Baccari 1985: 37). And it extended to the waterfront and the industrial and warehouse district on the east side of Telegraph Hill where many Italians worked — as laborers at the port or in port-dependent businesses such as the Italian Swiss Colony warehouse at Greenwich and Battery streets.

Dillon described the extreme points of North Beach as follows: The Ghirardelli Chocolate factory “and the nearby bocce ball court near Van Ness Avenue mark the extreme end of Little Italy, as far from the beginning, the old Transamerica Building as you can go” (Dillon 1985: 13); a portion of the old Transamerica Building was first built in 1908 as the Banco Popolare Italiano in the gore lot north of Washington Street between Columbus Avenue and Montgomery Street.

Finally, in the context of San Francisco, North Beach by whatever name or boundaries has long been considered a distinctive place among other distinctive neighborhoods. In 1897, Frank Norris wrote: “In a way San Francisco is not a city — or rather let us say, it is not *one* city. It is several cities”; he mentioned Chinese, Mexican, Spanish, Italian, Japanese, and suggested others as having their own enclaves. (Norris 1931: 134) Within North Beach, the idea that the neighborhood was a separate world from the rest of San Francisco was expressed in the name that many used for the area — “Little City” (Scherini 1980: 24-25) — a name used by residents and adopted by businesses, such as the Little City Market. From 1940 to 1969, there was a neighborhood publication whose title and subtitles conveyed much about the neighborhood attitude: *Little City News: Published Weekly in and for the North Beach District,* “*The City Within a City,*” with Coit Tower on the masthead to lay claim to Telegraph Hill as part of North Beach.

NORTH BEACH: HISTORY BEFORE 1906

When the Spanish arrived on the San Francisco peninsula in 1776, the area later known as North Beach was a valley of grass and sand between two hills; this valley opened to the north on San Francisco Bay. Because the hill on the east of this valley (not yet called Telegraph Hill) rose up out of the bay at the northeast corner of the peninsula, there was no way to travel by land from Yerba Buena Cove, where the ships first anchored, to the north waterfront. Thus, the best land route from Yerba Buena Cove to the north waterfront and the Presidio was through this valley. The trail that connected these points was long established when the first settlement in the valley was built by the soon-to-be widowed Juana Briones around 1836-1838 — a rancho with an adobe house at what later became the intersection of Powell and Filbert streets. According to tradition, Briones grazed cattle in the valley and her garden was the site of what later became Washington Square. (Bloomfield 1982: 24; Dillon 1985: 32)

Beginning in 1847, the valley and the hills on either side were included in a survey of streets and blocks to facilitate the sale and recording of land. The valley has never been named; the hills were Telegraph Hill on the east and Russian Hill on the west. The 1847 O'Farrell survey of the area extended from Post Street north to Green Street and from the bay west to Mason Street, thus including the southern part of what would later become North Beach. (Sandweiss 1993: 22-24) Before much if anything was realized in that grid, it was expanded north to the bay and west to Larkin Street by City Engineer William Eddy. With this expansion, prepared in 1851, all of the future North Beach district was included (Sandweiss 1993: 57-58; Woodbridge 2006: 33-34) **(Figure 5)**

The survey laid out a grid of rectangular blocks bound by streets oriented north-south and east-west. The grid was measured in Mexican varas (thirty-three inches) with that part north of Market Street called the fifty vara survey; in each block there were six lots measuring fifty varas on a side. Thus, the blocks were rectangles measuring 100 varas north-south and 150 varas east-west. Every street was originally twenty-five varas wide.

In the 1847 O'Farrell survey, except for one block that included an area set aside for Portsmouth Square, every block was the same; there were no alleys. In the 1851 map, another public square was designated — the future Washington Square; in addition, several alleys were shown in the future North Beach district and elsewhere. Most, if not all of these alleys appear to have been taken from within the boundaries of the fifty vara lots indicating that they were made by the private owners of those lots, perhaps to increase the utility or value of the remainder of the lots. (If these alleys were the result of the survey rather than private actions, they might more likely have straddled the lines between lots.) One result of this is that lots and blocks are generally divided asymmetrically.

Because, as Sandweiss says, the fifty vara lot “was a unit designed to accommodate the homesteads, gardens, and outlying ranchlands that the Mexican government had thought each family required, . . . it was far larger than the typical American urban lot.” (Sandweiss 1993: 57) **(Figure 6)** Thus, as the city expanded as an urbanized place, almost every original fifty vara lot was subdivided, initially into three to six lots, each more suitable for a city house or a rowhouse than for a house surrounded by a garden and farm animals. It was in the process of subdividing the fifty vara lots that the alleys were created. According to Nancy Olmsted, “in the 1880s some [of] these very small alleys were only 6 feet across — others were up to 20 feet in width.” (Bloomfield, et al. 1982: 81) Later, most of the narrowest alleys were widened. **(Figure 7)**

With the Gold Rush, San Francisco's population boomed, earning it the description “instant city.” While the new population was concentrated around Yerba Buena Cove and Portsmouth Square, substantial development also took place in the future North Beach district in a short period of time. From little or no development at the time the grid was laid out, a map published by the U.S. Coast Survey in 1853 showed



FIGURE 5. Official Map of the City of San Francisco prepared by William M. Eddy in 1851, known as the Eddy Red Line Map. Inner red line indicates the original shoreline, beyond which were surveyed water lots to be sold and filled. California History Room, California State Library, Sacramento, California.



FIGURE 6. North Beach From Russian Hill, 1876.
Courtesy of the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley (OAC #81).

substantial development in the area. This development was heaviest between Broadway and Washington Square, but there were at least a few houses in every block that would later be considered part of North Beach (Woodbridge 2006: 46). **(Figure 8)**

The rapid early growth of the city created two conditions that would have an enduring influence on the development of the future North Beach district. These were the long-lasting presence of the Barbary Coast along Broadway and Pacific Avenue, and the permanent location of Chinatown just west of the Barbary Coast. The dangers and perceived dangers of these districts, created a barrier to movement from the heart of the city to the future North Beach district, especially in conjunction with the constraints of topography — the lack of a land route along the water around Telegraph Hill and the presence of the hills on either side of the valley.

Once the grid was in place, lots were sold, and development began, the old trail to the north waterfront and the Presidio ceased to exist. With hills and sand dunes there was no direct route; rather, to make the journey involved numerous ninety-degree turns. **(Figure 9)** The most direct route from San Francisco's

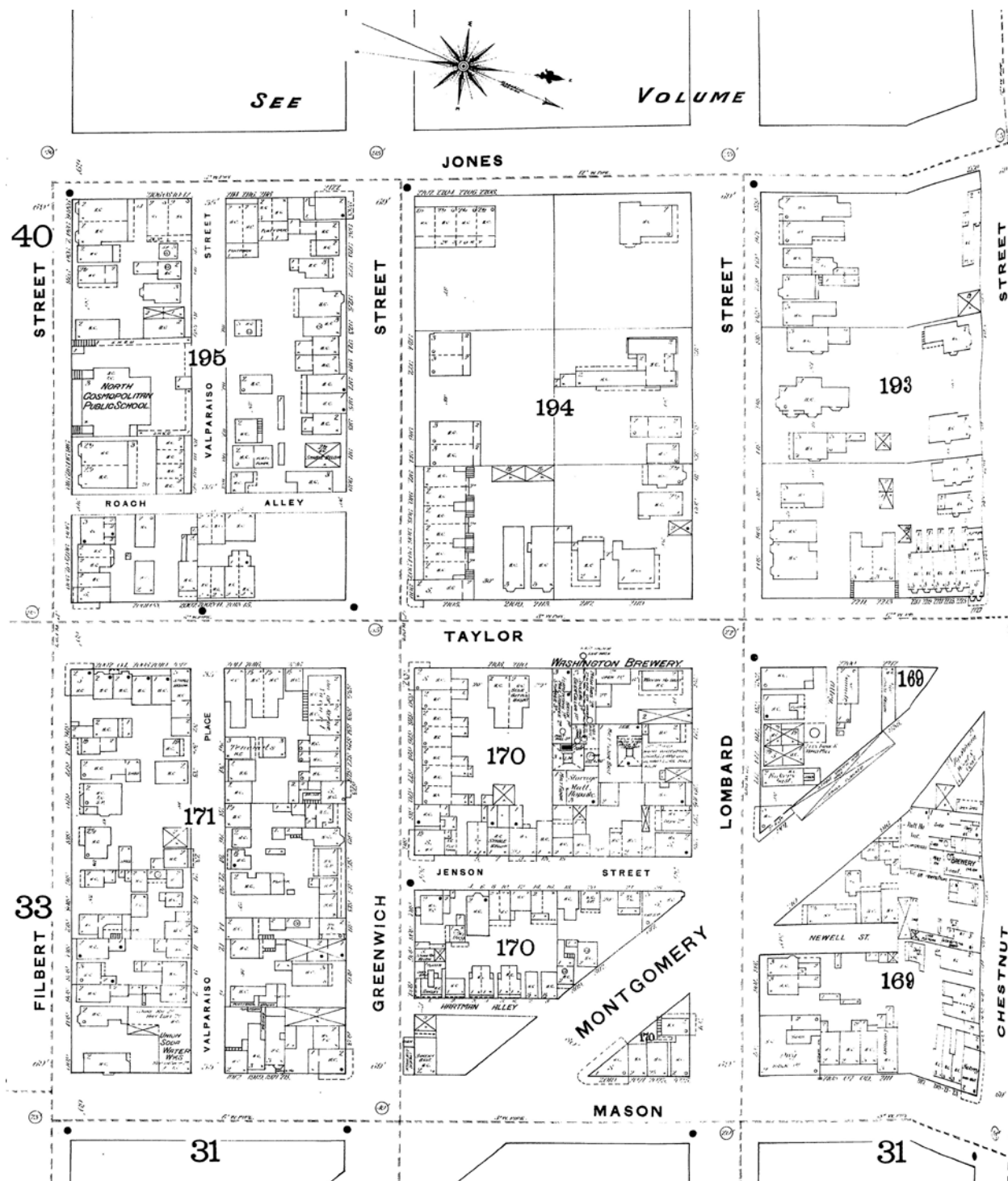


FIGURE 7. Portion of North Beach showing persistence of 50 vara lots (e.g. Block 194) and addition of alleys.

Sanborn Map Company 1886, vol. 2, p. 32a.

Library of Congress website via San Francisco Public Library.



FIGURE 8. View West on Vallejo St. from Kearny St., 1868.
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library (AAB-5645).

business district was across Broadway on Dupont Street, which resulted in the early development of Dupont as a business street. Although the route was inefficient, the need for it resulted in the establishment of an omnibus between South Park and North Beach (the north shoreline) in 1854. (Bancroft 1888: 778-780) In 1855, the first road along the water around the east side of Telegraph Hill was opened, expanding the ways for traveling between the business district and the north waterfront. (Myrick 2001: 53) In the late 1850s and 1860s, the whole area became more hospitable for settling and passing through with the leveling of hills and grading of streets, including Mason, Vallejo, Union, Filbert, Greenwich, Lombard, Stockton, Chestnut, and Broadway (Langley 1861-1874; Soule 1966; and San Francisco Board of Supervisors 1864, all cited in Bloomfield 1982: 28-30).

Efforts to build a new diagonal street across the grid linking the business district with the north waterfront were begun in the late 1860s. Following an act of the state legislature in 1872, this was realized in 1873-1875 with the opening of Montgomery Avenue (later Columbus Avenue) from the intersection of Montgomery Street and Washington Street to Beach between Leavenworth and Hyde Streets. The construction of Montgomery Avenue was disruptive to those who were displaced, but it also opened up new possibilities for development. (**Figure 10**)

Opening for service in October 1880, the Presidio & Ferries Railroad cable car line ran along Columbus Avenue from Montgomery Street, then west along Union Street on the way to the Presidio (*The Cable Car Museum*. "The Presidio & Ferries Railroad - 1880," n.d., para. 1). The area was also served by the Powell Street cable car line that opened in March 1888, which ran through North Beach along Mason Street, Columbus Avenue, and Taylor Street, ending at the wharf (*The Cable Car Museum*. "The Ferries & Cliff House Railway - 1888." n.d., para. 2).



FIGURE 9. View of North Beach through sand dunes, 1851.
Courtesy of the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.



FIGURE 10. View up Montgomery Ave. (now Columbus Ave.) ca.1880s.
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library (AAB-3391).



FIGURE 11. Pioneer Woolen Mills, Black Point, San Francisco, 1860's. Society of California Pioneers.

When the early north shore of San Francisco included a beach (interrupted by sites developed for industries such as Selby Smelting and Lead Company, Pioneer Woolen Mill (**Figure 11**), and the San Francisco Coke and Gas Company), it developed with various recreational attractions. In addition to the beach itself, Neptune Baths and the Dolphin Rowing Club drew people to the waterfront. Incongruously, recreational and industrial uses came together at Meigg's Wharf about where Pier 41 would later be built at the foot of Powell Street, on and around which were clustered both amusements like Warner's Cobweb Palace, a distant precursor of Pier 39, and industries, like a brewery, lumberyards, and a grain

shed. Construction of the seawall from 1878 to 1893 changed all this, eliminating most of the recreational attractions and generating a new industrial zone linked to the rest of the port by a railroad.

As improvements were made in the valley, various developments affecting Telegraph Hill were also related to the evolution of the North Beach district. First among these was quarrying, which from the 1850s to 1914 removed substantial parts of the hill, especially on the east and south sides, for ballast, construction, paving, and landfill. This kept the ever-moving areas near the active quarrying dangerous, noisy, unpleasant, and cheap to rent. (**Figure 12**)



FIGURE 12. View west on Broadway from Montgomery St., "The Deep Cut" through Telegraph Hill, ca. 1894. Society of California Pioneers.

The top of Telegraph Hill, whose name came from its early use as a communication point beginning with a signal pole in 1846 and the Marine Telegraph station in 1850, was purchased as a park in 1876. With the opening of Montgomery Avenue in 1875, the hilltop site of Pioneer Park was more accessible to the public than previously and was the location of efforts to attract visitors, all of whom would pass through the North Beach district to get there. In 1882, the Telegraph Hill Observatory, Restaurant and Concert Hall, nicknamed The Castle, was opened. Efforts to build a cable car succeeded only in a short-lived line on Greenwich Street from Powell Street to the top of the hill.

The 1886 Sanborn maps show that by that year the North Beach district was largely but not completely built up. The southern end of the district including the blocks above Broadway were the densest, including “Italian tenements” on alleys, hotels and lodging houses, and commercial uses in almost every building on a main street. Further north, including the blocks around Washington Square, there was a predominance of houses, mostly row houses but some freestanding. There were also vacant lots in many blocks. **(Figure 13)**

Thirteen years later in 1899, Sanborn maps show most blocks still dominated by houses, but with many flats mixed in, providing for an increasingly dense population. Most were two- and three-story buildings. A few had the look on the map of what were later called Romeo Flats — six-flat buildings with two tiers of three flats. Most flats and a few other buildings were labeled “platform over”; while the key does not explain this term, it may refer to a platform above the roof to accommodate outdoor activities. At this time there were very few vacant lots. **(Figures 14, 15, and 16)**



FIGURE 13. North Beach, before 1875.
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library (AAB-9636).

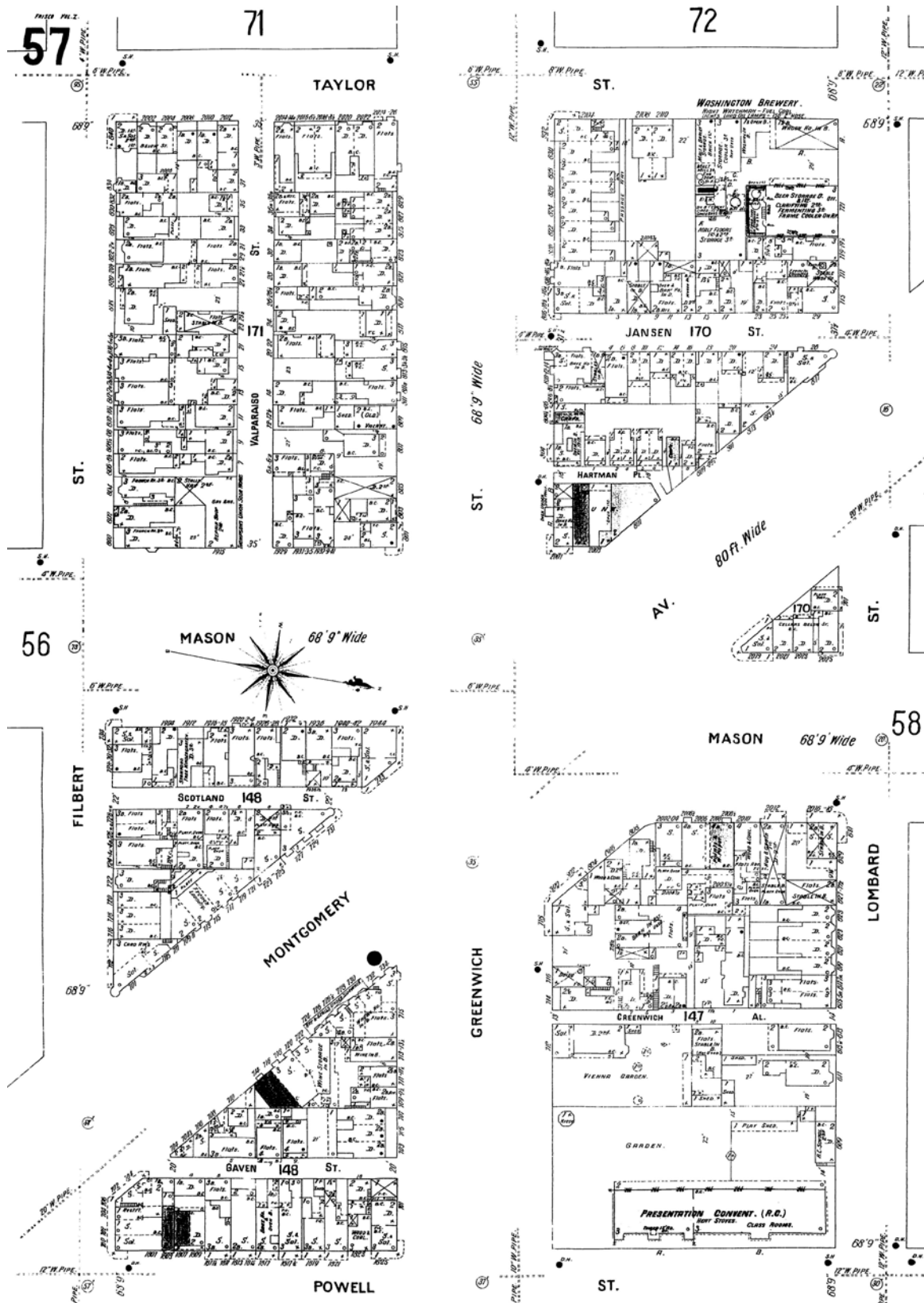


FIGURE 14. Portion of North Beach showing dense development of dwellings and flats.
Sanborn Map Company 1889, vol. 1, p. 57. Library of Congress website via San Francisco Public Library.



FIGURE 15. Kearny St., before 1906.
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library (AAB-4221).



FIGURE 16. View East on Green St, 6 April 1906.
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library (AAB-3904).

As the population of North Beach grew, so did amenities and problems. By 1867, Washington Square was provided with trees, paths, and a flagpole. (Young 2004: 34) In 1903, a bond issue passed to purchase the block bound by Lombard, Powell, Greenwich, and Mason streets as the North Beach Playground. (Myrick 2001: 197)

Advocating these changes and addressing problems in the neighborhood were a number of organizations. A kindergarten established in the 500 block of Union Street in 1881 was supported by Phoebe Hearst, Jane Stanford, and others. (Myrick 2001: 173, 175) The Outdoor Art League, an elite women's club with a focus on art and the environment, opposed the quarrying operations on Telegraph Hill. They were joined in 1890 by another women's group with a focus on social issues, the Willing Circle. The Willing Circle, later the City Front Association and finally the Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Association, also supported services for children. In 1902, they established a settlement house, the Telegraph Hill Neighborhood House at 427 Vallejo Street followed by the Neighborhood House at 650 Filbert Street in 1905. (Dillon 1985: 42)

Another type of group, the North Beach Improvement Club was in operation by 1892, with the infamous Abe Ruef one of its officers. (Dillon 1985: 40) It appears to have been "resuscitated" in 1903 when the club supported the bond issue for expansion of Pioneer Park and purchase of the North Beach Playground. (Adams 1911)

Along with the street grid, parks and playgrounds, the establishment of schools constituted an important public investment in the area. The first school in the area was on Broadway. This was the ancestor of the Washington Irving School at 350 Broadway from 1852. The Union Grammar School was opened in 1854, the Jean Parker School at 840 Broadway in 1861, and the Union Primary School (later Lafayette and Garfield schools) in 1867. (Myrick 2001: 149, 173, 191)

III. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

DEVELOPMENT PHASES

Reconstruction: 1906 to 1915

Earthquake and Visions for Recovery

The earthquake and fire of 18 April 1906 devastated the neighborhood leaving only one house, the shell of St. Francis of Assisi Church, and a few scattered brick walls within what is normally called North Beach. **(Figures 17 and 18)** Also a number of houses survived on the east side of Telegraph Hill. The house that survived was the Giovanni Costa mansion, at the southwest corner of Lombard and Kearny streets: “Giovanni Costa, his son, Enrico Costa, and a faithful retainer named Benedetto Pagani . . . literally covered every exposed portion of the house and outbuildings with carpets and rugs soaked in wine and kept the tapestries wet during the hottest portion of the blaze which licked up all around them in its fiery path.” (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 19 May 1907) It is not known when the Costa house was finally demolished; Sanborn maps show it still standing in 1913 and no longer there in 1949.

In the aftermath of the disaster, there was enormous uncertainty about the future in the city at large. Would the city rebuild? Would it be different? Where would the various districts of the city be – produce markets, offices, shopping, hotels, theaters, entertainment, vice, etc.?



FIGURE 17. Ruins of North Beach, 1906.
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library (AAC-3862).

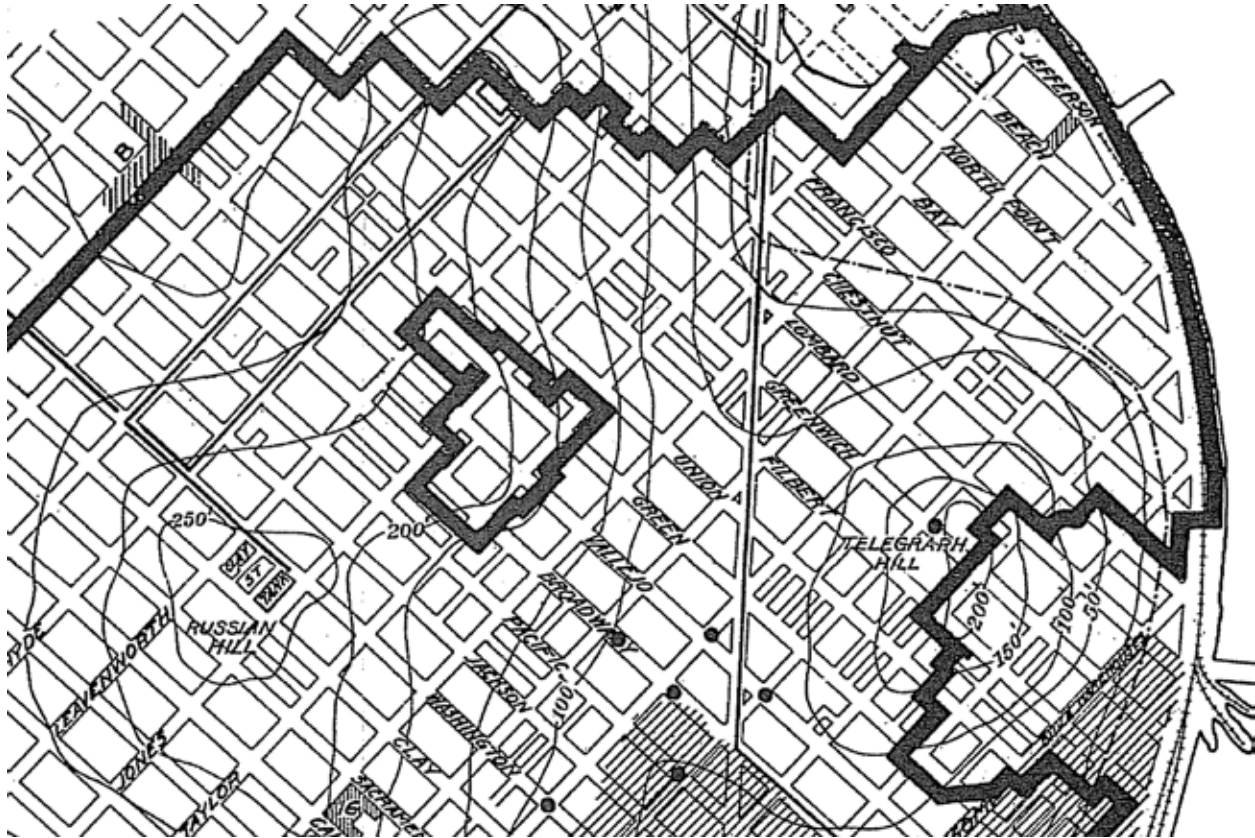


FIGURE 18. Map detail of San Francisco showing burned district.
U.S.G.S.1907:15.

One immediate possibility was the realization of the Burnham Plan of 1905 – a plan to remake San Francisco more like Paris – approved by the Board of Supervisors just before the earthquake. In a magazine article published only a few weeks after the earthquake, John Galen Howard, one of California’s most respected architects, endorsed the adoption of the Burnham Plan. (Howard 1906:535) For the vicinity of the North Beach district, some of the most extensive and elaborate proposals were made. Near the North Beach district would have been the Outer Boulevard which would follow “the lines of the waterfront . . . over the warehouses, its roadway forming their roofs”; this would have run east of Telegraph Hill and curved across the north edge of the city. (Burnham 1905: 53)

As part of a citywide “System of Circuit and Radial Arteries” existing streets would have been designated and new streets created; these would have been adorned in various ways such as regulated “heights and architecture of structures . . . commemorative monuments, fountains, etc.” Affecting North Beach, Montgomery Avenue would have been cut through the heart of the business district to Mission Street. From Montgomery Avenue and Broadway would be a new northwesterly diagonal to Bay and Hyde streets and beyond. Another southeasterly diagonal would connect Montgomery Avenue to the Ferry Building. A curvilinear street along the base of Russian Hill would run just west of North Beach. (Burnham 1905: opposite p. 44, 73, 179)

One of the most spectacular elements of the plan was the treatment of Telegraph Hill: “This hill is of historic importance and could only be removed at a great cost. It is recommended to leave it intact as to mass, to reform the street system gradually by terracing and planting streets impassable to traffic and, in general to make the hill more habitable. The principle approaches . . . lead to a contour road inclosing a

park proposed for the summit.” The summit “would be an admirable location for a monument symbolic of some phase of the city’s life.” An illustration of the “suggested Architectural Treatment” of Telegraph Hill included the entire area below the monumental hilltop, ranging down to Stockton Street, with a few grand plazas, stairways, and large structures like university buildings; where there were hundreds of small lots with houses, flats and businesses before, there would be about a dozen institutions. Where there was a grid of streets and alleys there would be a completely new arrangement of wide, ornamental streets designed for the topography and views. (Burnham 1905: 131, 146, opposite 146)

Immediately west of this Telegraph Hill plan was a two-part plan for Washington Square and a large playground (described as a small park) north of it occupying the three full blocks from Union to Lombard between Stockton and Powell streets. No mention was made of the planned North Beach Playground just west of this proposal. The design of the proposed playground followed the guidelines for the General Treatment of Parks, with terraces, “a consistent type of architecture of the greatest simplicity,” statuary in parterres, formal tree planting, steps, and balustrades: “in the smaller parks this amounts to a lesson of order and system, and its influence on the masses cannot be overestimated.” The playground would include oval-ended men’s and women’s gymnasiums, a field house, a children’s ground, and a ball field. Tree planting and sidewalks would orient the playground and Washington Square to each other and to the re-imagined Telegraph Hill. (Burnham 1905: opposite 111, 145, and 146)

Ironically, even without the earthquake and fire, if the Burnham Plan had been fully executed, it would have largely destroyed the North Beach district. For North Beach, the Burnham Plan was a plan for removal of a working class neighborhood. **(Figure 19)**



FIGURE 19. Telegraph Hill, Looking East, showing suggested architectural treatment.
Burnham and Bennett, *Burnham Plan* 1905:14.

As in most parts of the city, those recommendations were largely abandoned as frightened property owners insisted on the security of the old boundaries of existing streets, lots and blocks. At the same time, there were other proposals, some based on or inspired by the Burnham Plan. One month after the earthquake, the North Beach Improvement Club met to support the proposal of the mayor's Committee of Forty for wider streets and to build a streetcar line on East Street (the Embarcadero) from the Ferry Building to the Presidio — the same route as Burnham's Outer Boulevard. (*San Francisco Call*, 19 May 1906) In July 1907, the Board of Supervisors approved the extension of Montgomery Avenue (Columbus) at both ends, as proposed in the Burnham Plan. On the north end, it was to be extended from Beach Street to the waterfront. On the south it was to be extended below Market Street. (*San Francisco Examiner*, 22 January 1907) Neither of these extensions was made. An editorial in the *Call* in July 1907 supported the revival of proposals by James G. Fair in the 1890s to establish large manufacturing plants on the north waterfront: this development would require "hotels and apartment houses for the accommodation of those who have employment in the great industrial hive which will be established on North Beach." (*San Francisco Call*, 8 July 1907) Much later, the creation of Telegraph Hill Boulevard along contours rather than the grid in 1923 and the completion of Coit Tower at the top of the hill in 1934 were both realizations of ideas that began with the Burnham Plan.

Transit Lines and Utility Infrastructure

Along with buildings, the earthquake and fire also damaged or destroyed the urban infrastructure of streets, sidewalks, water mains, sewers, gas and electrical lines, and transit lines. The Presidio & Ferries Railroad that ran along Columbus Avenue to Union Street (see page 15) suffered the most damage of any cable car line and was discontinued after the earthquake and fire when it was replaced by electric streetcars. This line was purchased by the Municipal Railways of San Francisco in 1913. (*The Cable Car Museum*. "The Presidio & Ferries Railroad - 1880," n.d., para. 2). The Ferries & Cliff House Railways' Powell-Mason cable car line (see page 15) was restored in total on its original route and still operates today (*The Cable Car Museum*. "The Ferries & Cliff House Railway - 1888." n.d., para. 6). These transit lines maintained the pre-1906 land use patterns and commercial corridors.

Bond issues were quickly passed to repair the streets and sewers and to build a new high pressure water system for fighting fires. Parallel to these public efforts were the private reconstruction of the sidewalks, water mains, gas lines, and electrical lines. All of these were essential to occupying buildings.

Fire Limits and Building Laws

Although public intervention in the form of the Burnham Plan was rejected, new city and state regulations played an important role in the rebuilding of North Beach. First of all, no new permanent construction could begin until the new building law took effect on 5 July 1906. (Tobriner 2006:200) Under the Building Law, the city was divided into areas that were either within the "Fire Limits" or outside of them, with different types of construction required or permitted in the two types of areas. North Beach itself was crossed by the boundary line of the Fire Limits. The "Fire Limits" defined the area within which fire resistant building materials and methods were required — all construction had to have brick or reinforced concrete exterior walls. For North Beach, the area within the fire limits consisted of all property south of the center line of Broadway from Sansome Street to Cordelia Street (an alley just west of Stockton formerly called Virginia Place). This included the Columbus Avenue Corridor to its beginning at Washington and Montgomery. The fire limits also included all property south of Greenwich and east of Sansome — the warehouse district at the eastern base of Telegraph Hill. (**Figure 20**)

In the area outside of the fire limits, it was permissible to build in materials that were not considered fire-proof. Thus, areas outside the fire limits were largely built of wood because wood was cheaper. A

secondary effect of these requirements was that individuals were by far the most common builders outside the Fire Limits, whereas the more expensive structures required inside the Fire Limits were often built by real estate development companies, investors, and institutions.

In addition to the building laws, the area was subject to a new type of law governing multiple-unit residences, known as tenement house laws and as hotel and lodging house laws. The San Francisco Tenement House Ordinance was passed in July 1907, a year after building resumed under the new post-earthquake building law. This was followed in July 1909 by the State Tenement House Act. (San Francisco Housing Association 1911: 76) Then, in 1913 they were joined by the State Hotel and Lodging House Act. Each of these laws was subsequently amended.



FIGURE 20. Map showing the area of North Beach within the “Fire Limits,” the area within which the new building law required fireproof construction.

In general terms, these laws meant that most new permanent construction in North Beach after the earthquake, specifically wood construction, followed the same rules as before, rules that many people were familiar with. It meant that new construction within the fire limits, which remained unchanged in this part of the city, was similar to what went before. Regulations for wood-frame buildings presented in Part XI of the Building Law: Provisions Relating to the Construction of Frame Buildings, were not extensive. Key features were requirements for “2 × 4 inch studs, 16 inches on centers,” ratios of the width of brick foundations to their height including their use as retaining walls, partitioning of attics for fire safety, use of bridging in stud walls “to prevent the passage of fire and smoke,” and reference to sheathing. (San Francisco Board of Public Works 1906: 83-86) Because of the vast amount of work being done in a short time, and the existence of only a “chief with three field inspectors and two clerks,” the building laws could not have been properly enforced. (Corbett 1980: 25) Less than two weeks after permanent building officially resumed, the *San Francisco Call* reported on a report of Commissioner Maestretti to the Board of Public Works: “The number of buildings and the rapidity with which they are being erected makes it impossible for the board to send around its inspectors to pass upon their safety.” (*San Francisco Call*, 18 July 1906)

However, the laws also brought complicated new considerations to the building of multi-unit buildings. The context in which these laws emerged, their contents, and their impacts are discussed below as part of the story of the reconstruction of the district.

Reconstruction – First Steps

For some time after the earthquake of 18 April 1906 and the three-day fire that followed, housing was the most urgent problem throughout the city. Immediately afterwards, some moved in with friends and family in surviving houses in San Francisco and the Bay Area: for example, “Many of those who lived in what was known as the ‘Latin Quarter’ in the district have located on the flat north of Filbert Street between Van Ness Avenue and Octavia Street, a section that was not damaged.” (*San Francisco Call*, 2 June 1906) Some moved away. Many, including most of the poor and working classes (who made up most of the population of North Beach), as well as a cross section of all classes, lived in tents.

As soon as the fire was out, families began camping in the parks: “Tents were provided in the first days by voluntary agencies, by the sub-committee on housing the homeless, by the army, and by the American Red Cross.” A photograph captioned “First tents in Washington Square” records this brief phase. Social and sanitary problems led to the intervention of the U.S. Army, beginning with the division of the city into Civil Sections. North Beach fell into two sections, with that area north of Union Street, including Washington Square, placed in Civil Section III and the area south of Union Street in Civil Section IV. (Russell Sage Foundation 1913: 70, facing p. 286)

About six weeks after the fire on 6 June 1906, the army took over the park and began operating Official Relief Camp No. 21 in Washington Square, including a Hot Meal Kitchen. Tents were occupied rent-free for about seven months. Each camp was run by a Camp Commander “under military discipline.” (Russell Sage Foundation 1913: 78, 82-83, 404) (**Figure 21**)

Efforts to build more permanent housing were delayed “because . . . emergency needs had first to be met.” Then delays were caused by shortages of money; shortages of building materials, especially lumber; the loss of planing mills; shortages of teamsters to deliver materials to building sites; “abnormal prices asked for labor”; “difficulty of securing reliable contractors”; “destruction of deeds”; uncertainty about the future; “tardiness of insurance adjustments”; “repudiation of liability”; and political wrangling. (Russell Sage Foundation 1913: 216-217) In addition, it was not legal because no building permits could be issued to build until the new building law was passed 5 July 1906.



FIGURE 21. Washington Square refugee camp, 1906.
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library (AAC-3128).

Temporary Buildings

Nevertheless, there was substantial immediate construction in North Beach. Right away, many Italians returned to “the same house lot, though in shelters improvised from tarpaulins, boards, sheets of tin, corrugated iron,” and other possible, though unusual materials. (Russell Sage Foundation 1913: 74) According to Richard Dillon: “Rebuilding had begun only a week after the last flames flickered out,” citing as examples two houses at Greenwich Street and Gerber [Gerke] Alley owned by Frank Bacigalupi; Bacigalupi appears to have replaced those early shanties under a building permit for new construction on 19 October 1907.

Dillon claimed that there was so much construction in North Beach while the Burnham Plan was still under consideration, that the plan itself “was thwarted by North Beach. That sector had rebuilt too fast for such a plan to be implemented.” (Dillon 1985: between 40 and 41, 159-160) Because the most vocal opposition to the plan came from downtown property owners and the newspapers, who barely mentioned North Beach in their arguments (e.g., *San Francisco Call*, 23 May 1906), this would appear to be an exaggeration; at the same time, opposition in North Beach may have been a factor.

One week after the fire was extinguished the newspapers began reporting that “some businessmen, especially retailers and mechanics, were ready to build temporary structures on their ruins in the burnt district, but were delaying because they feared to proceed without an official permit.” Trying to facilitate immediate needs without compromising the long term, the mayor stated: “within the burnt district any one is free,

without permit except from the owner of the property, to erect a one-story wood or iron temporary building in which to resume business.” (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 28 April 1906) Within two more weeks, this policy was being abused and violators were threatened with arrest. Already, two-story buildings were rising and many supposedly temporary buildings were being built as permanent structures. (*San Francisco Call*, 11 May 1906) From 19 May 1906 to 2 July 1906, sixteen building permits were issued for construction in North Beach, perhaps technically for temporary buildings. (**Figure 22**)



FIGURE 22. Scattered temporary buildings in North Beach, 1906.
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library (AAC-3858).

The most extensive construction of temporary buildings — or at least of buildings built before it was legal to build permanent buildings — was in North Beach. On 2 June 1906, more than a month before adoption of the new building law would make it legal to build permanent structures, the *Call* reported: “there are now a great number of new buildings, plain but comfortable, which furnish homes for many who will have protection against climatic changes until such times as they can rebuild more expensive structures . . . That the people who are having temporary homes reared are manifesting a desire to do better when conditions will permit is apparent from the fact that they are building on the rear of their lots and clearing away the front for future improvements.” (*San Francisco Call*, 2 June 1906) On 13 June 1906, the Mayor reiterated his warning that violators of the temporary building policy would be arrested. (*San Francisco Call*, 13 June 1906)

Then, two weeks after the new building law was approved and the legal construction of permanent building commenced, the Board of Public Works announced that they were preparing to give thirty-to-ninety day notices for the removal of temporary buildings. Commissioner Maestretti gave two reasons for this

requirement: that temporary buildings and buildings built without permits were “of flimsy construction” and that “insurance . . . companies are refusing to write risks in menaced districts” — in other words, nobody can get insurance if there are substandard buildings in the neighborhood. Moreover, “As the matter now stands the Commissioner fears that influence will be exerted to preserve the wooden buildings and in time it will be hard to cause their removal.” (*San Francisco Call*, 18 July 1906)

Most of the temporary buildings in North Beach were residential buildings, many of them at the rear of lots. From a review of Sanborn maps, aerial photographs, building permit applications, and published notices, it appears that as of 2020 there are 75 to 85 cottages in the rear of North Beach lots that were built in 1906 and that may originally have been temporary cottages. Most of these are not visible from the street.

In addition to residential buildings, however, temporary commercial structures for stores were also built, especially along Columbus Avenue where, according to the *Call* on 2 June 1906, “a number of stores are opened for business.” (**Figure 23**) For example, Zabaldano’s Pharmacy and the Buon Gusto Restaurant were among the tenants of a multi-unit building for stores at Columbus and Jones; and “a building for the Fior d’Italia restaurant at the northeast corner of Broadway and Kearney Street” was almost completed one month after the fire. (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 24 May 1906) One last effect of this temporary commercial construction was the shifting of North Beach businesses from Stockton, Mason, and Powell streets to Columbus Avenue. (*San Francisco Examiner*, 20 May 1906)

The largest temporary structures were built along the waterfront and at the north end of North Beach for industries, immediately providing large numbers of jobs at the edge of the neighborhood. Globe Grain & Milling Company, Vulcan Iron Works, Joshua Hendy Machine Works, A. Merle Company (iron beds), the Pacific Cereal Association factory, the Britton & Rey typographical plant, the Bellingham Bay Company lumber yard, the McNicoll & Company elevator factory, and many small businesses and industries were housed “along the bay front of North Beach between Russian and Telegraph hills,” constituting an amount of building activity that was “probably greater than in any other section of San Francisco” only one month after the fire went out. (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 24 May 1906)

Although legally they were temporary structures, built without code requirements or inspection by the



FIGURE 23. Cavalli & Co., on Stockton St. and Columbus Ave., 1906. San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library (AAC-6553).

Board of Public Works, according to the *Chronicle*, “The Temporary buildings are of great variety and it is notable that some of them are of great beauty . . . as far as their external appearance goes, many of the new temporary structures have every appearance of great durability . . . most of the temporary structures are stout and durable, anything but flimsy.” (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 20 December 1906)

As for the interiors, the *Chronicle* said, “many of them are handsome and sumptuous. Many of the newly reopened cafes, offices, and shops although only temporary, are much more artistic and attractive than the old permanent ones which were burned out.” (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 20 December 1906)

The beauty and durability of many of these buildings contributed to an ambiguity over their status that lasted for many years. Originally, all were to be demolished after ninety days, then extended to two years. However, if the permanent home of a business wasn’t ready at the end of the time limit, the city often did not force the business out of its temporary home. The longer this went on, the harder it was to get rid of them. An incident in 1917, in which three temporary structures built after the earthquake caught on fire and killed three firemen, called attention to the ongoing problem. (*Architect and Engineer* 1917)

Permanent Buildings

Once the building law was approved, construction began rapidly in North Beach. Because North Beach north of Broadway had been almost totally of wood construction, it was consumed by the fire except for a few brick walls (and the Costa house). The totality of destruction was, ironically, an advantage because: “There was little to clear away but ashes before rebuilding began.” (Emerson 1907: 195). This was in extreme contrast with downtown and other large areas where months of hauling away bricks, iron, stone, and other materials was an expensive, time consuming and energy draining operation that delayed reconstruction.

Only one week after permanent construction legally resumed, a *Chronicle* headline claimed, “Hundreds of Residences and Seventy-five Apartment Houses Going Up.” (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 13 July 1906) The rapid and busy pace of construction continued for months. On 1 September 1906, the *Chronicle* said, “The busiest portion of the city today is the northern, or what was known as the Italian quarter. There are more teams and men at work there than in any other part of town.” (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 1 September 1906)

There were several reasons why construction began so quickly in North Beach. While access to building materials was a severe problem elsewhere, especially in working class residential neighborhoods, A.P. Giannini, president of the Bank of Italy, used old connections among Italian ship captains to buy and bring as much lumber as possible from Washington and Oregon to North Beach. (Nash 1992: 34, James 1954: 29)

While access to money for building was uncertain in most parts of town, especially for working class people, for different reasons two North Beach banks were able to release money to account holders and loan money for building. Giannini in particular was praised as a leader in the reconstruction of North Beach who in his words and actions stimulated the early rebuilding by the local population. (James 1954: 28-31; Bonadio 1994: 35-36; *San Francisco Call*, 12 July 1908) Also, Andrea Sbarboro, head of the Italian American Bank wrote: “We were particularly fortunate in being able to supply our clients with money for replacing their homes as soon as they were ready to build. This accounted for the promptness with which the people of North Beach were able to replace their homes and rebuild their quarter before any other section of the city.” (Sbarboro 1911: 192)

While it has been addressed citywide, the role of insurance in rebuilding North Beach is not fully understood. (Todd 1929: 162-205) Richard Dillon said in general terms that the insurance companies paid off in North Beach (Dillon 1985: 159). The *Call* reported that for “the flat between Telegraph Hill and Russian Hill . . . even the earthquake clause companies have paid their policies there. They came to the conclusion that that particular part of the big fire was not an ‘Act of God’ and so they paid for it.” (*San Francisco Call*, 26 August 1906) It also appears that insured property owners in neighborhoods like North Beach and the Mission benefitted more than others because the size and value of new buildings in these areas was comparable to those that were destroyed. Although few insurance companies paid the full value of their policies, the proportion they paid was a substantial part of the cost of the new building. For example, if owners of a destroyed two-story house worth \$1,500 received an insurance payment of \$1,000, that was a substantial part of the cost of a new house or two-flat building.

This was not the case in neighborhoods like the Tenderloin below Pine Street or South of Market where the fire limits requiring fire resistant construction were extended into areas that previously were mostly wood houses and flats for working class populations like North Beach. In such neighborhoods, owners who received \$1,000 for a wood house that had been destroyed were not allowed to rebuild in wood. Instead, they had to build much more expensive structures of brick, concrete, and steel. Because \$1,000 was only a small part of the cost of such a structure, many could not afford to rebuild, but sold their lots to wealthier individuals or to real estate developers. A secondary consequence of this situation was that it took longer to rebuild on a property that had to go through a sale and for which more complicated architectural and engineering plans had to be prepared. All of this illustrates an advantage of North Beach in rapidly rebuilding after the earthquake and fire.

An intangible characteristic of North Beach that many observers remarked upon was the nature of the largely Italian population. According to Rose Doris Scherini in her study, *The Italian American Community*, “Other factors contributing to the early rebuilding of North Beach included the presence of a number of skilled masons and construction workers among the Italians, their sense that North Beach was ‘their’ district; their legendary thrift and frugality with the consequence that many had small savings to be matched by bank loans; and their own mutual aid societies. This episode may also reflect a special attachment to place, to one’s own property.” (Scherini 1980: 22; see also Dondero 1953: 88-89) Various observers noted that the residents of North Beach didn’t procrastinate but began rebuilding as soon as it was allowed (*San Francisco Call*, 14 April 1907); they rebuilt on their own without outside constraints: the people of the district “have built up their own houses without regard to labor union restrictions or contentions.” (Emerson 1907: 196) According to the *Call* seven weeks after legal permanent building resumed and at the height of the rebuilding frenzy, “The Italians have set about their own home building with determination . . . Every man is his own carpenter north of Broadway, and he also evolves the architectural finishes out of his own head.” (*San Francisco Call*, 26 August 1906) A year later, the *Chronicle* reinforced this observation for North Beach: “perhaps a larger proportion of dwellers there may claim to have had a hand as well as a voice in the construction of their houses than is the case in any other district of equal architectural quality.” (Stellman 1907)

The reconstruction of North Beach and the rest of San Francisco was not entirely accomplished by private initiative and circumstance. Indeed, in addition to the building law, aspects of public policy facilitated and shaped the reconstruction in important ways.

Housing Policy – Reconstruction

The urgent matter of housing citywide was addressed by the emergency Finance Committee, the army, and the American National Red Cross, as well as by the newspapers. Three months after the earthquake, on 20 July 1906, while the tent camps were still full, a body was formed that would prepare a housing plan and carry it out. This was “The San Francisco Relief and Red Cross Funds, a Corporation,” referred to as The Corporation, with James D. Phelan, president. Until the summer of 1908, the work of The Corporation was a factor in the housing market; after that time, housing was again produced only by the private market.

Once planning began for permanent housing, class differences emerged. Those with means took care of themselves: they built new houses in San Francisco or elsewhere. A large number of people, including many in North Beach, however, had limited or no ability to pay for new housing. The San Francisco Relief Survey identified four classes of displaced people: property owners who lost their homes, chronic dependants, non-property owners who had been renters, and a subgroup of renters called resourceful non-property owners. (Russell Sage Foundation 1913: 218-219) (**Figure 24**)

At first, various means of providing housing were discussed or tried, and rejected. For example, a real estate company proposed building large numbers of houses on unimproved land at the edge of the city — too far from jobs. And, a few pre-fabricated houses were brought in from Michigan and assembled; but this solution ignored a key aspect of the recovery — to provide jobs for laborers.

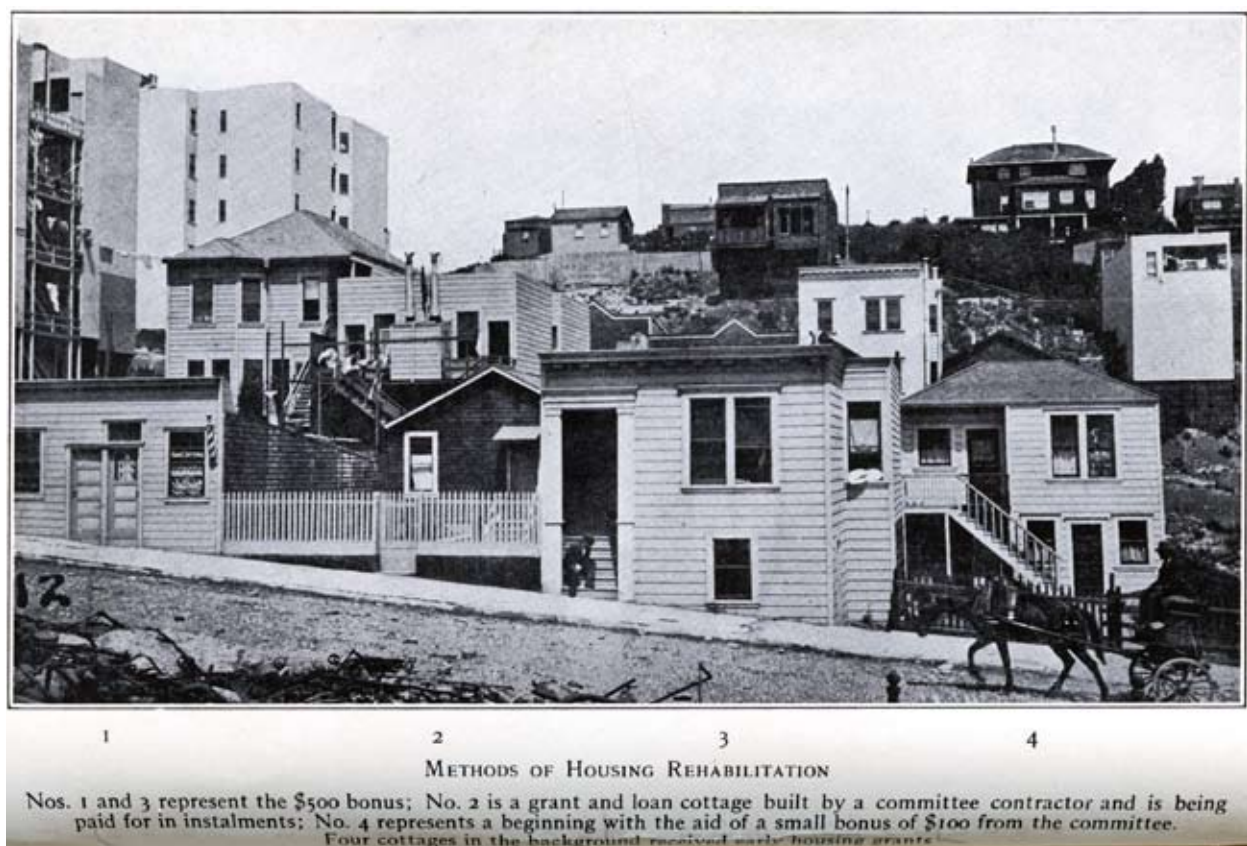


FIGURE 24. Housing built after 1906 with help from the Red Cross.
Russell Sage Foundation 1913: 218-219.

The Corporation quickly developed a housing plan which addressed the needs of three major groups resulting in three categories of houses: Camp Cottages, Bonus Houses, and Grant-and-Loan Houses. Camp Cottages were built for the largest, most needy, and most urgent group which consisted of renters in the burned district who lost their homes and had no means of building new ones. For these people, 5,610 Camp Cottages were built, mostly in parks. In Washington Square, functioning as Official Relief Camp No. 21, tents and temporary shacks were removed and replaced by rows of closely spaced Camp Cottages (Russell Sage Foundation 1913: facing p. 294; Myrick 2001: 138) (**Figure 25**) Construction of Camp Cottages, sometimes called Refugee Shacks or Earthquake Shacks (Cryan 1998), were built between 10 September 1906 and

19 March 1907. The maximum population of Official Relief Camp No. 21 was 593. (**Figure 26**) Although Washington Square was the site of the only camp within North Beach, there were other camps within Civil Sections III and IV where other neighborhood residents stayed, including Point Lobos Square and Fort Mason. Altogether 12,473 refugees initially registered in Civil Section III and 10,737 registered in Civil Section IV. Occupants who paid a nominal rent were later given the cottages if they would move them out of the camps. About the time the last Camp Cottages were built, the first ones were being moved away. Camp Cottages were moved to all parts of San Francisco and beyond. On their new sites they were sometimes joined to other structures or other camp cottages and altered to create permanent residences. (**Figure 27**) It seems likely that some were moved to sites in North Beach, but only one cluster has yet been identified: ten of the cottages were moved across the street from Washington Square to the northwest corner of Filbert and Stockton streets where Saints Peter and Paul Church had been, to house the Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Association. (Myrick 2001: 133) After the association moved to its new headquarters in 1909, the former cottages were demolished or moved again.



A street, showing close quarters in camp
WASHINGTON SQUARE CAMP

FIGURE 25. Washington Square Camp.
Russell Sage Foundation 1913: facing p. 294.



FIGURE 26. Camp Cottages, Camp 21, Washington Square, 1906.
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library (AAC-3129).



A janitor's comfortable home



Improved at small expense
CAMP COTTAGES AFTER REMOVAL

FIGURE 27. Camp Cottages after removal from refugee camps to private lots.
Russell Sage Foundation 1913: facing p. 226.

Camp Cottages were built by contractors hired by The Corporation. They were of four different standard types, all of them rectangular gable-roofed buildings of single-wall construction. They were of substandard construction that did not comply with the building laws because they were necessarily quick and cheap and were initially intended to be temporary.

Bonus Houses were designed for the most affluent of the refugees, for people who had owned their own houses: “the bonus recipients, possessing more than ordinary ability, were able to re-establish themselves.” (Russell Sage Foundation 1913: 247) Many of these people also collected fire insurance. The Bonus Plan paid up to \$500 (about one-third the cost) to anyone who rebuilt a house within the burned district. The houses were built by the owners or by contractors hired by the owners. Plans were first approved by The Corporation, but only to insure that they met health and safety standards. Bonus Houses were as varied as any completely private houses built at the time. The term Bonus Houses included single family houses, and flats. Bonuses were paid after the houses were built so that the bonus was less a subsidy than an incentive to build for a desirable class of people that might have moved out of the city.

The Bonus Plan was in effect from August to 1 October 1906 and again for two weeks in February 1907, resulting in 885 Bonus Houses. Illustrations of Bonus Plan houses for Italians, presumably in North Beach, show buildings with a variety of appearances indistinguishable from other buildings in the neighborhood. (Russell Sage Foundation 1913: facing p. 244, 250, and 275) **(Figures 28 and 29)** It is not known how many Bonus Plan houses were built in North Beach, but an article in the *Chronicle* said of the bonuses, “perhaps the largest number was claimed by builders in the Italian colony,” referring to North Beach. (Stellman 1907) Only 24 building permits were issued for construction in North Beach during the dates of the Bonus Plan, but it is not known how the program worked. Perhaps houses already built or under construction would qualify. Two Bonus Plan houses have been identified in North Beach: 351-353 and 357 Union Street, both designed by Kidd & Anderson and built in 1906. (Russell Sage Foundation 1913)

The third program, the Grant-and-Loan Plan, was intended for “resourceful non-property owners” who, it was believed, “should be stimulated . . . to acquire their own homes.” (Russell Sage Foundation 1913: 219) This program was in operation from 1 November 1906 to late July 1907, supporting the production of 1,572 houses.” The applicant was required to show that he had suffered material loss and that he was the head

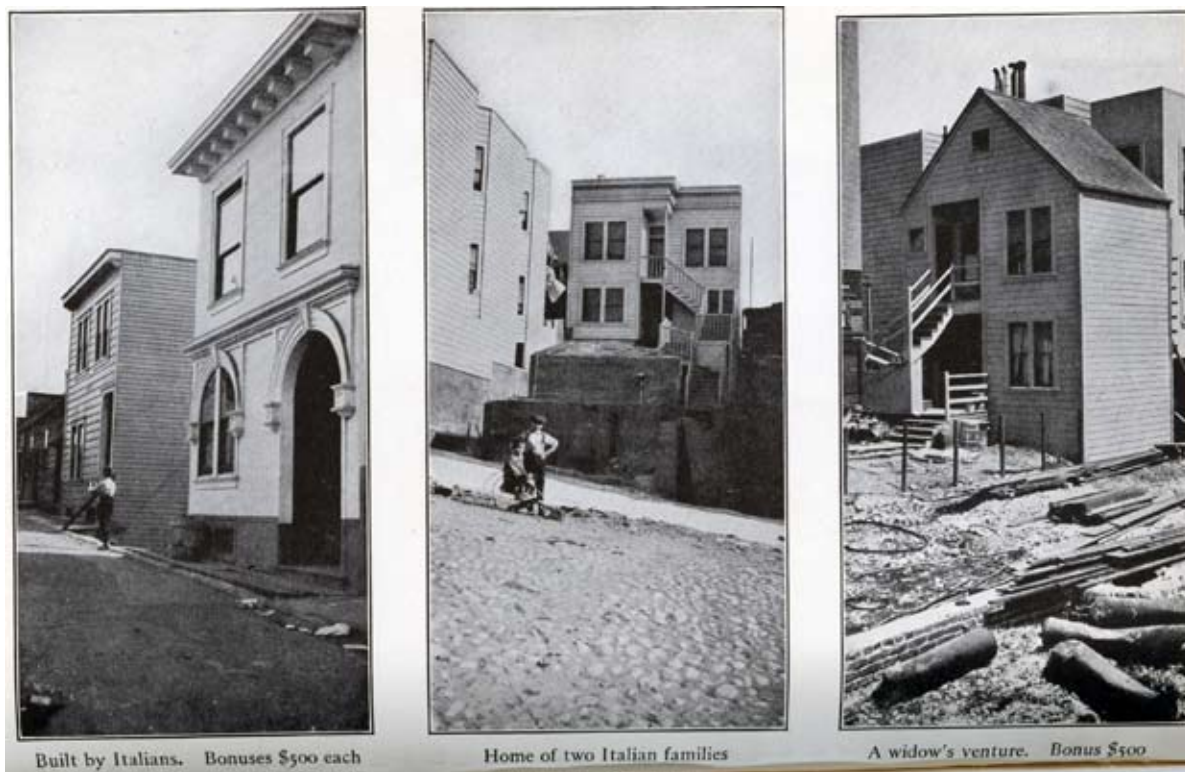
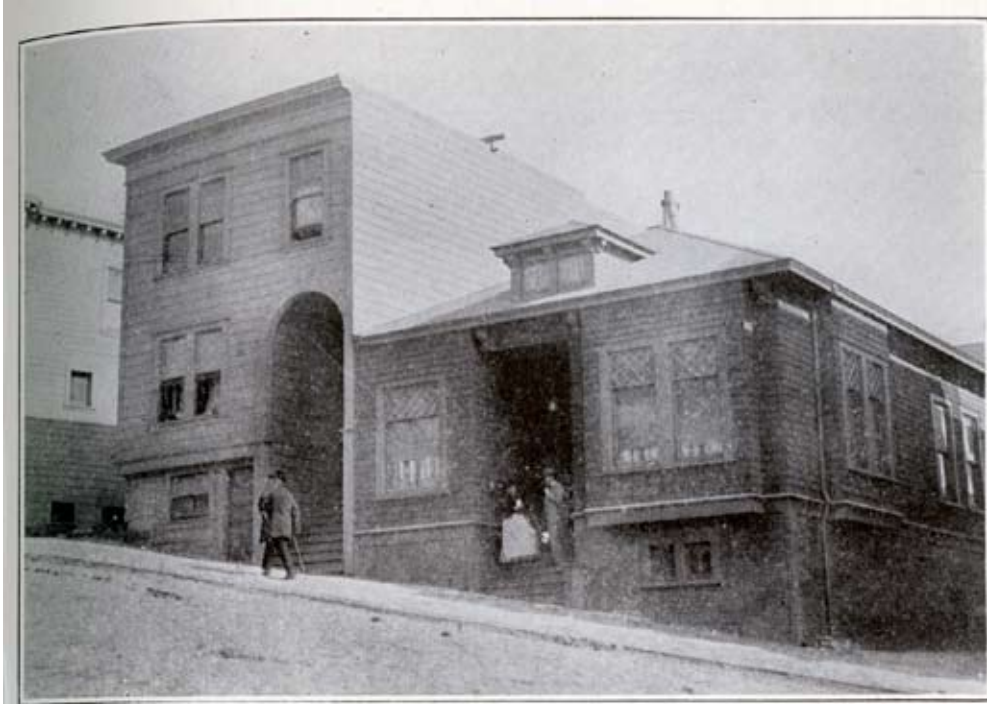


FIGURE 28. Bonus Plan houses for Italians.
Russell Sage Foundation 1913: facing p. 245.



Two ambitious dwellings built with aid of bonuses



Built with bonus of \$500 and money privately loaned

BONUS HOUSES

FIGURE 29. Bonus Houses. Top photo shows 351-53 and 357 Union St. (constructed 1906), extant.
Russell Sage Foundation 1913: facing p. 250.

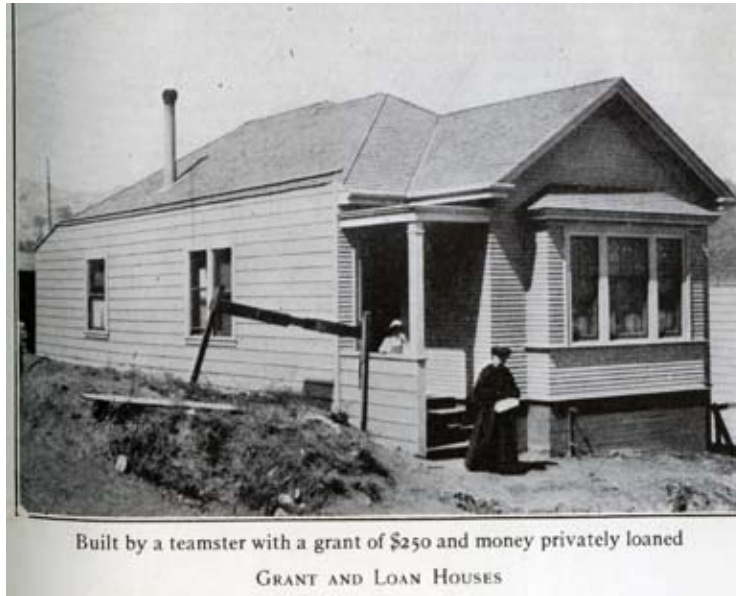


FIGURE 30. Grant and Loan House.
Russell Sage Foundation 1913: facing p. 262.



FIGURE 31. Grant and Loan House.
Russell Sage Foundation 1913: facing p. 268.

of a household and was able to support his family, that he was unable to secure a suitable house at a reasonable rent, and that he had secured a lot in the city and county of San Francisco on which to build.” (Russell Sage Foundation 1913: 254) During the period of this program, 297 building permits were issued for construction in North Beach. **(Figure 30)**

Grant-and-Loan Houses were built in two ways: of the 1,572 built, 1,029 were built according to the plans of the owners and 543 were built according to the standard plans of The Corporation by contractors hired by The Corporation. One of these contractors has been identified — the Armstrong Construction and Engineering Company: “Under the direction of the relief committee . . . the company built more than 900 of these cottages at a cost of from \$333 to \$540 each” (*San Francisco Call*, 22 January 1908); two buildings by Armstrong have been identified in North Beach: 717 Union Street (1908) and 882-84 Filbert Street (1908). All plans had to meet the building code. The relationship of grants and loans varied widely according to individual situations. Most were one-story, shingled, wood-frame structures, some had basements for storage or subletting as residences. Because they tended to be built on cheap lots, many were built on steep sites so that basements were exposed to light and were well-drained. Again, illustrations show buildings indistinguishable from others in North Beach (Russell Sage Foundation 1913: facing p. 261, 269, and

275) and again, it is not known how many Grant-and-Loan houses were built in North Beach. **(Figure 31)**

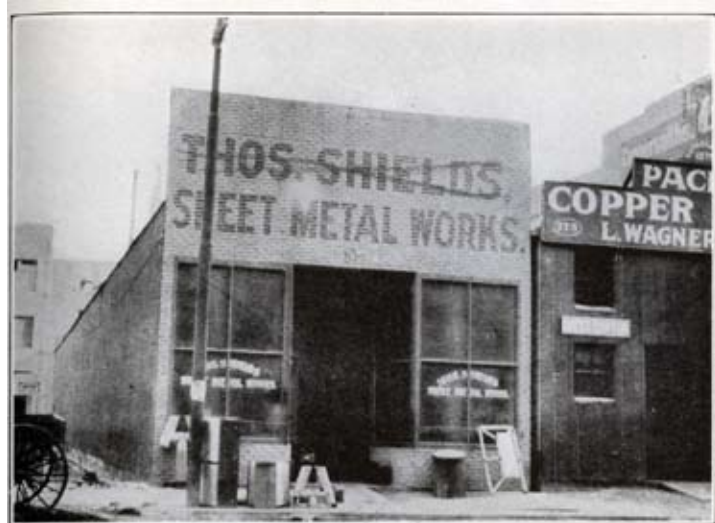
A final, relatively minor category of housing supported by The Corporation was the two-story tenement house of which nineteen were built to house about 650 people (about 35 people per building, perhaps in six units each?). Not much information is available about these buildings, except that like the Camp Cottages, they “were entirely constructed by the Department of Lands and Buildings through its own contractors” and that “The total cost of the 19 tenement houses, including painting, sewerage, patent flush toilets, water, gas in each room and in halls, sinks in kitchen, baths and public laundries, was \$41,678.95, an average of about \$2,200 per tenement.” (Russell Sage Foundation 1913: 220-221) It is not known how many of these might have been built in North Beach.

Commercial and Institutional Buildings

Less is known about assistance provided to businesses and institutions for rebuilding. Beginning in December 1906, the Department of Relief and Rehabilitation made grants to institutions. They were made to institutions that took over aspects of relief work from the City, the Red Cross, or the Army. (Russell Sage p. 141) For businesses, the first six grants were made by the Rehabilitation Bureau between 16 May 1906 and 29 June 1906 for \$75 to \$500, to a shoe repair business, two restaurants, a rooming house, a grocery, and a bookstore. The Rehabilitation Bureau was succeeded by the Rehabilitation Committee which made numerous grants to businesses, most of them not identified, between 2 July 1906 and 1908. (Russell Sage p. 171) (**Figures 32 and 33**)

Reconstruction Boom

North Beach was universally acknowledged to be the first part of San Francisco to be rebuilt: “The first fire-swept district to be restored was North Beach. Wood being the material, the buildings grew up with such rapidity that the physical aspect of whole blocks changed in a month.” (Steele 1909:87) According to a newspaper report in October 1906, six months after the earthquake and less than four months after rebuilding began, “The North Beach district has been the first to resume its former aspect . . . more dwellings, both flats and private houses, have been erected there than in any other portion of the city . . . 543 structures within four months.” (*San Francisco Examiner*, 11 March 1906) One year after the earthquake and fire, four million dollars had been spent by Italians rebuilding 700 houses in North Beach (Dondero 1953: 94; Dillon 1985: 160) At that time, there were “few temporary shacks or cabins in this busiest of the city’s residence districts.” (*San Francisco Call*, 14 April 1907) While much was left to be done in the city as a whole, “In less than three years practically the entire district was rebuilt.” (Adams, C.F. 1911)



Owner aided by Rehabilitation Grant and money privately loaned



Hat maker aided by a Rehabilitation Grant
BUSINESS REHABILITATION

FIGURE 32. Business Rehabilitation.
Russell Sage Foundation 1913: facing p. 198.



Cigar store of an Italian cripple



Store owned by a German-Swiss couple

BUSINESS REHABILITATION

FIGURE 33. Business Rehabilitation.
Russell Sage Foundation 1913: facing p. 188.

A map published on the anniversary of the earthquake showing new buildings that had been built within the area of destruction, showed North Beach more built-up than any other large residential neighborhood; only the temporary commercial zone along Van Ness, where the downtown stores had relocated was as completely built up. (*L'Italia* 1907) (Figure 34)

The progress in rebuilding North Beach was celebrated on 29 June 1907 on Stockton Street: “the band which always paraded this thoroughfare on Saturday nights was again in evidence and every store in the street was lighted and thrown open to the public . . . Practically every store that was on Stockton street between Broadway and Union before the fire is back in its old location.” (*San Francisco Call*, 30 June 1907) Louis Stellman in the *Chronicle* said, “The new North Beach is a much cleaner, handsomer, more modern, more comfortable, and more sanitary section than it used to be . . .” (Stellman 1907)

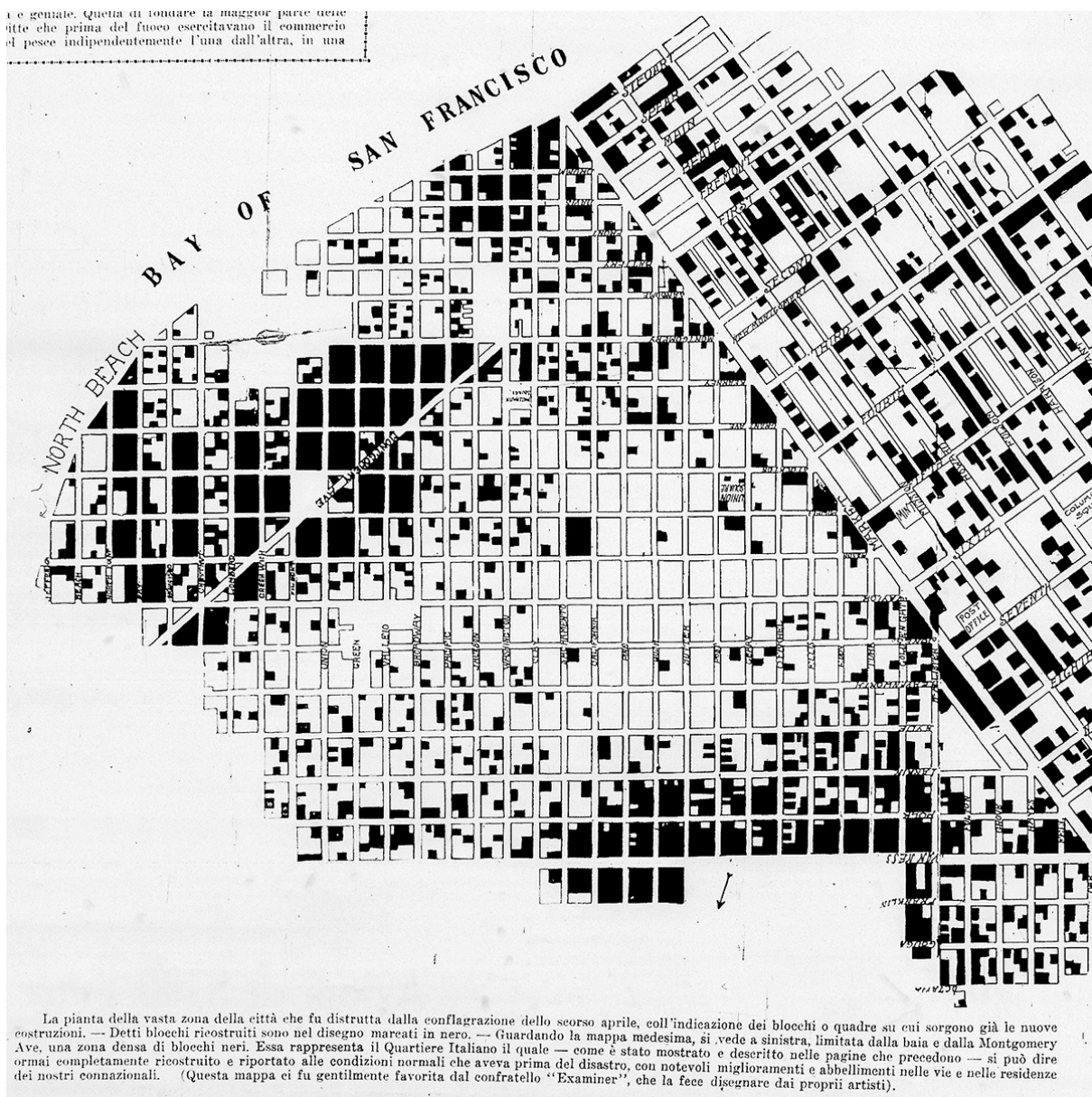


FIGURE 34. Map showing new buildings in the area of destruction caused by the 1906 earthquake and fire.
L'Italia, 18 April 1907:32.

Why was North Beach rebuilt so quickly? According to the *San Francisco Call*, there were three reasons: “the ten million in the banks of the quarter, the \$500 bestowed on the burned out ones by the relief commission, and the pennies saved for this monumental work by those whose hearts and souls were in the task.” (*San Francisco Call*, 12 July 1908) By this, the newspaper was referring to the availability of money from the Bank of Italy, the Italian-American Bank, and others; to the Bonus Plan program that provided \$500 to homeowners who rebuilt in the district; and to the character of the population.

As to the character of the population, the *Chronicle* noted “that no large realty syndicate is rebuilding North Beach. It is not a landlord’s section, but a place where there are, perhaps, more individual owners of moderate means than anywhere else in San Francisco.” (Stellman 1907)

The *San Francisco Call* attributed the city’s relative immunity to the panic of 1907, which closed banks all over the country — but only one in San Francisco — to the steady construction of houses by workingmen, notably in North Beach. (*San Francisco Call*, 21 June 1908, p. 24) The stability of the Bank of Italy was perhaps the greater factor. (James and James 1954: 37-40)

The first Sanborn maps prepared after the fire, published in 1913, showed North Beach largely built up as it is today. Many blocks were completely built up; almost all were at least 80% built up. By April 1913, the Chief Building Inspector reported about North Beach: “It is safe to say no other section, residential or business, can show a greater volume of rehabilitation or a greater degree of persistency in development work.” (*San Francisco Call*, 27 April 1913) (**Figure 35**)

In the two years between publication of the Sanborn maps and the opening of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition (PPIE), many of the few remaining vacant lots were built upon: “There was little new construction in North Beach after 1915 . . . [and] almost the only buildings erected in North Beach after 1915 were speculative ventures promoted by Italian developers, most of whom were directors of the newly created Italian-American Bank.” (Cinel 1982: 113) In other words, between 1906 and 1915 when most of North Beach was built, its builders were individuals and families; after 1915, when little room was left to build, most builders were not individuals for themselves but investors and real estate development businesses.

The PPIE was the catalyst for construction of the Stockton Tunnel in 1912-1914, which was promoted by the North Beach Improvement Association as a way of increasing business in North Beach and by downtown interests as a means of getting visitors from the main hotels to the site of the PPIE. The North Beach Improvement Association compared the effect of the subway from Manhattan on property values in the Bronx to what would happen in North Beach after the tunnel was built. New ferries and ocean-going steamships that would dock at new piers on the north waterfront would stimulate the construction of hotels and lodging houses and would “give an enormous population to the North Beach district.” (*San Francisco Call*, 12 June 1910)

While the period of planning for the PPIE was the end of the period of reconstruction of North Beach, other types of improvements were also proposed. The most spectacular was a proposal by the Greek consul general to build “a replica of the Parthenon” on Telegraph Hill; “but the idea aroused little enthusiasm and nothing came of it.” (Myrick 2001: 72) The North Beach Promotion Association supported locating the proposed exposition at Harbor View (where it was, in fact, built) as a benefit to North Beach. The North Beach Improvement Association supported improvements for Pioneer Park on Telegraph Hill; establishment of a public playground at Greenwich and Powell streets, including a swimming pool; and the containment of vice in the old Barbary Coast on Pacific Avenue, away from the residential parts of North Beach. (Adams, C.F. 1911)

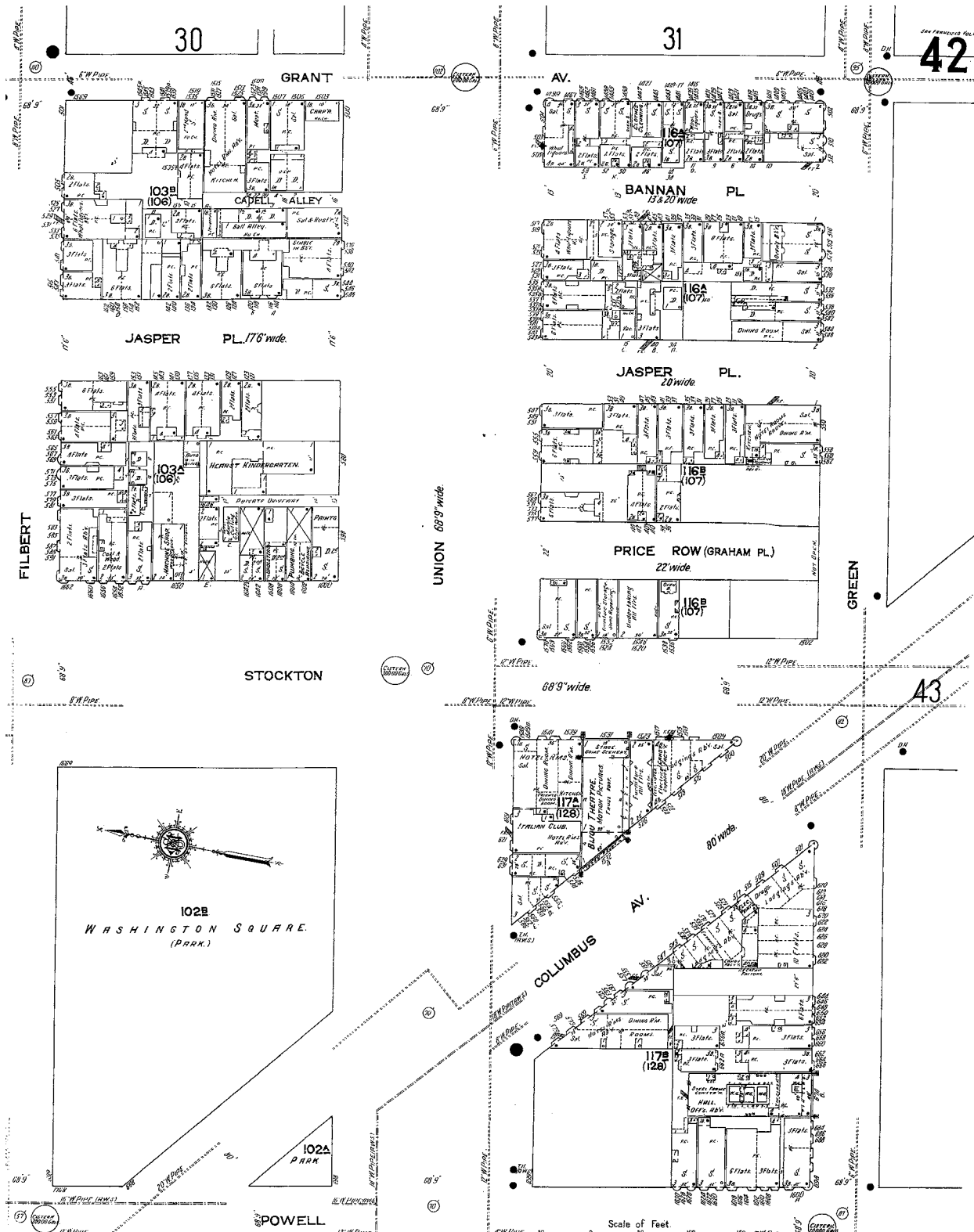


FIGURE 35. North Beach in 1913 was largely rebuilt.
Sanborn Map Company, 1913, vol. 1, p. 42. Library of Congress website via San Francisco Public Library.

Expansion and Infill: 1916 to 1941***Development of North Beach From the Panama-Pacific International Exposition to World War II***

With almost no room to build, North Beach has changed little in its appearance since 1915. One of the principle changes has been the construction of a few large buildings in conspicuous locations both within the North Beach district and near it on Telegraph Hill.

The first of these was Saints Peter and Paul Church on the north side of Washington Square, designed in 1908, largely built in 1922-1924, and given its decorated facade in 1940. (Baccari 1985: 3, 5). **(Figure 36)** In the early 1930s, the first large apartment buildings were built in the area, mostly on Telegraph Hill — among these were 199 Chestnut and 1441 Montgomery. (Myrick 2001: 23-24) One six-story apartment, built for Mrs. Louis Ghirardelli at 290 Lombard Street, was disliked for blocking views and “brought about the forty-foot height limit on the Hill.” (Dillon 1985: 45; Sanborn Map Company 1949; Ryan 1960: 327) **(Figure 37)** Telegraph Hill Boulevard opened to Pioneer Park at the top of Telegraph Hill in 1923. Coit Tower was completed in 1933, adding a major visual monument and increasing visitor traffic through North Beach. **(Figure 38)**



FIGURE 36. Saints Peter and Paul Church, 1939.
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library (AAB-1021).



FIGURE 37. 290 Lombard St. (constructed in 1940)
blocked views. Photo by Judith Powell.



FIGURE 38. Aerial view of Coit Tower, 1939.
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library (AAC-1473).

A second change was the ongoing construction of new residential buildings — still dwellings, flats, and apartments but with a smaller proportion of flats than before. This development occurred by the replacement of some small or temporary residences and by the infilling of remaining vacant lots, most of which were at higher elevations on Telegraph Hill and in the northern part of the district where industries had been until the 1921 zoning ordinance. With the diminishing presence of industry beginning gradually about 1921, and the development of attractive housing in the Marina starting in 1924, new sites at the north end of North Beach were developed for more prosperous residents. This occurred especially after automobiles came into wider use in the 1920s, by which time many North Beach residents could afford them. An example of this development was the replacement in 1925 of six houses on the north side of Lombard west of Kearny by six flats at 300-330 Lombard by the Mercantile Securities Corporation. Five of the demolished houses were small one-story structures, possibly temporary buildings from before July 1906, Camp Cottages, or early legal permanent buildings (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 22 August 1925)

Many of these buildings differed from their earlier counterparts primarily by incorporating automobile garages in their original designs and by the use of brick veneer on the street facades, especially on the ground floor. **(Figure 39)** Decorative detail was, as before, derived from classical and Renaissance precedents, or it was visually compatible with the Arts and Crafts movement, California's Hispanic heritage, or Mediterranean vernacular architecture.



FIGURE 39. Detail of 602-04 Lombard St. (constructed in 1926),
Flats incorporating garages. Photo by Dennis Hearne.

Another change resulted from the evolving nature of traffic and public transit. In 1921, Columbus Avenue was widened and the sidewalks were narrowed between Washington Street and North Point. This may have reduced the size of some subterranean sidewalk vaults but had no other impact on buildings. (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 11 September 1921) **(Figures 40 and 41)**



FIGURE 40. Columbus Avenue, before 1921.
J. B. Monaco (jbmonaco.com, Telegraph Hill and North Beach Photo Gallery, image 32 of 91).



FIGURE 41. Columbus Ave. at Jackson St., 1929.
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library (AAB-3396).

Federal Housing Act of 1934

The Federal Housing Act of 1934 (Pub.L.84-345, 48 Stat.847), enacted 28 June 1934, was part of the New Deal passed during the Great Depression in order to make housing and home mortgages more affordable. While this had a major impact on much of San Francisco, in North Beach the effect was limited because there were so few available sites on which to build. Nevertheless, between 1935 and 1941, thirty-seven residential buildings were built in North Beach – eight dwellings, twenty-seven flats, and two apartment buildings. The dwellings and flats may all have been built with FHA loans; it is not clear whether apartment buildings were eligible. Most of the owners of these buildings had Italian names, indicating continuity of development in the neighborhood. At the same time, the architects of the new buildings were overwhelmingly not Italian, indicating a shift in cultural practices. After a long period of isolation, the Italian population was becoming more integrated with the general population of the city. Among the new dwellings, unlike earlier examples that were typically simple cottages, many of these were designed for more affluent owners and represented the beginnings of gentrification of the neighborhood. In 1939, Charles Caldwell Dobie wrote: “The greatest enemy of the Hill to-day is not . . . bohemian gone pallid, but wealth seeking new fields to contaminate.” (Dobie 1939: 181)

Investment and Remodeling: The 1939 Golden Gate International Exposition

In the late 1930s, around the time of the Golden Gate International Exposition of 1939, many property owners invested in the remodeling of their buildings. Especially near Washington Square, buildings were remodeled with new stucco facades in the Moderne Style. According to Anne Bloomfield, “In January 1939, the parish magazine of SS Peter and Paul Church noticed that ‘Even our own Italian quarter of North Beach has caught the spirit and is falling in line in the movement of Beautification!’” (Bloomfield 1982: 21 citing *Il Messaggero di Don Bosco*, January 1939: p. 19) Associated with the promotion of the district to outsiders, development in this period included neon signs and tourist-oriented restaurants and stores.

Development of North Beach After 1941

While the remodeling of the 1930s was the result of an aesthetic choice to improve and update the appearance of buildings in conspicuous locations, another wave of remodeling beginning after World War II was generated by more mundane considerations. After the economic constraints of the Depression years and the difficulty in obtaining materials during World War II, the overwhelmingly wood building stock in North Beach was in need of maintenance and repairs. Buildings needed to be painted, roofs repaired, windows repaired, leaks plugged, rotted wood replaced, etc. New, inexpensive materials, some of them developed or improved during the war were marketed for their low maintenance properties. The facades of many wood buildings in North Beach were re clad in asbestos-cement shingles, vinyl, or aluminum siding. Others were covered in stucco. Damaged or leaking wood windows were replaced by aluminum sash, often in standard sizes that did not match the old windows in size or proportion, sometimes resulting in the need for wall patches. When this work was done, original decorative features were often removed to accommodate the new materials, to simplify future maintenance conditions, and to create a more modern look in keeping with the new materials.

Since the 1980s, a third wave of rehabilitation and remodeling has generally responded to the desires of a new, far wealthier class of owners and occupants than the working class immigrants they were built for, altering interiors, especially kitchens and bathrooms, but maintaining exterior appearances. As real estate values have risen, wood houses and flats have been altered for professionals paying high rents or for conversion to condominiums. On Broadway and Columbus, some brick hotels and lodging houses have been converted to offices and other uses.

Major structural changes to the neighborhood ended its relative isolation and substantially increased automobile traffic. In 1952, the Broadway Tunnel was completed connecting North Beach to the western part of the city. In 1960, the Embarcadero Freeway on-ramp at Broadway connected North Beach to the East Bay and the San Francisco Peninsula. Among other effects, these changes facilitated access by visitors to the restaurants and entertainment life of North Beach. A short-lived proposal by the Redevelopment Agency for an eleven story apartment building in North Beach was defeated in 1956. (Myrick 2001: 24) This suggests another theme that might be developed for North Beach, the history of neighborhood action.

SOCIAL GROUPS AND SOCIAL LIFE

Social Groups

Demographics: Population Groups

A precise picture of the changing character of the population of North Beach is impossible to know. However, from census records (census tract data and census block data), reverse directories, naturalization records and other sources, a geography thesis by Ellen McElhinny provides information useful in understanding how the population has changed and what the population was like in key periods. Although the thesis focuses on the period since 1940, a substantial amount of background is presented on earlier periods. (McElhinny 1995)

Taking the broadest view, the population of North Beach has been in flux from the beginning but can be seen in three main periods. Before the earthquake and fire of 1906, the population was a mix of immigrant and ethnic groups. From 1906 to the end of World War II, North Beach was predominantly Italian. In the late 1940s, Italians began moving out and Chinese began moving in until the predominant population was of Chinese ancestry.

During the Gold Rush, cohesive settlements emerged for Chileans, Australians, Germans, and Irish in the area that later became North Beach. In the 1850s and 1860s churches and other institutions established in and near the neighborhood reflected the presence of other population groups, including Mexicans, French, Russians, Jews, Germans, Chinese, African Americans, and Italians. (McElhinny 1995: 10-15)

African Americans lived in and around the area in the nineteenth century but appear to have largely if not entirely moved out before 1906. From the 1850s to the 1870s, the presence of Black churches and schools in the area indicates a Black residential population as well. The Bethel A.M. E. Church, the first black church in the city, was located on Powell Street south of Broadway in 1852. The First Colored Baptist Church was first at an unknown location on Kearny Street, also in 1852, and on Dupont Street between Filbert and Greenwich Streets from 1854 to 1868 when it moved south of Chinatown. A school for African Americans called the Colored School was at two different locations along Broadway within what is now called North Beach in the 1860s. The Colored School closed in 1875 when segregation of schools in San Francisco ended. According to the 2016 African American Citywide Historic Context Statement prepared by Tim Kelley, et al. for the San Francisco Planning Department, “By the last quarter of the nineteenth century, one-third of the City’s Black population lived in a six-block area bounded by Stockton Street, Kearney Street, Washington Street, and Broadway.” (Kelley: 2016: 32) This area was within the long-time boundaries of Chinatown and overlapped at its western edge with North Beach.

The increasing population of speakers of Romance Languages — Spanish, Mexicans, French, Portuguese, Italians, Swiss, Peruvians, Chileans, and Basques (different language group but from regions of France and Spain) gave rise to the term Latin Quarter for the neighborhood. This is described in the *Draft Landmark Designation Amendment for Iglesia de Nuestra Senora de Guadalupe/Our Lady of Guadalupe Church*,

906 Broadway, Landmark Number 204, dated 6 February 2019, prepared by Desiree Smith and Frances McMillen of the San Francisco Planning Department. At page 11 they quote from the *Draft San Francisco Latino Historic Context Statement*, prepared by Carlos Cardova and Jonathan Lammers as follows:

At the time of the 1860 and 1870 censuses, most foreign-born Latinos in San Francisco had migrated from Mexico, Chile, and Peru. The majority of the city's Latin Americans and Spaniards lived in a part of North Beach known as the "Latin Quarter." The area was a first stop for immigrants from all over Europe and Latin America. Within this cosmopolitan neighborhood was a substantial Italian enclave, as well as smaller enclaves of Mexican, Spanish, French, Portuguese and other immigrant groups. As a collection, the North Beach area was often called the "Latin Quarter." Eventually, a subsection of the neighborhood came to be known by various nicknames, including the "Spanish Settlement," "Spanish Colony," "Little Mexico," and the "Mexican Colony." For residents of the neighborhood, the area was sometimes called "la colonia," or eventually "Barrio Guadalupe." (Cardova and Lammers 2018:31)

Then, by 1900 the Italians had become the largest group in the neighborhood, though not yet a majority. The term "Little Italy" which had begun as a name for an enclave within the larger neighborhood, was sometimes used to refer to the whole. (McElhinny 1995: 14)

The earthquake of 1906 served as a catalyst to speed up the transition of North Beach to a predominantly Italian neighborhood: "It may have been the Latin Quarter (with its ethnic mix) that burned down but it was 'Little Italy' that was rebuilt." (McElhinny 1995: 28) The population of Italians in North Beach reached its peak about 1935, then began falling significantly after World War II. (See also pages 8-10.)

The following table, derived from McElhinny, shows the Italian-born population of San Francisco compared to the Italian-born population of North Beach and the population of "foreign stock" where people of foreign stock are people born in another country and their offspring. (McElhinny provides a definition from Rose Doris Scherini, *the Italian American Community of San Francisco: A Descriptive Study*. New York: Arno Press, 1980: " 'Foreign stock' comprises foreign-born plus native born of foreign parentage.")

	Italians in San Francisco	Italian in North Beach	Foreign Stock in North Beach
1870	1,600	320	—
1880	2,500	1,000	—
1890	5,200	—	—
1900	7,500	1,500	—
1910	16,919	6,768	—
1920	69,483	27,793	45,559
1930	85,332	34,133	58,021
1940	—	—	—
1950	20,000	5,000	—

The table also illustrates the difficulty in obtaining precise or meaningful figures. Because data is easier to get for "Italian-born" people than foreign stock and "foreign stock" does not differentiate between Italian stock, Chinese stock, or any others, these data give us only a rough picture of what we might want to know. For example, although there were only 5,000 Italian-born people in North Beach in 1950, down

from 34,133 twenty years earlier, there were many more than that (but still an unknown number) of Italian stock. Much of the decline in the Italian-born may have to do with the dying off of elderly people, rather than with their moving away. And while the population of the Italian born had declined, the population of their offspring had increased.

Just as the Italians had built a neighborhood of cheap rental housing after 1906, as they began moving out in the late 1940s, the Chinese were attracted to the cheap rents. As more Italians vacated rental units and sold property, the Chinese came in as renters and property owners. By 1977, 40% of the population of North Beach was Chinese and by 1990, 66% of the population was Chinese. (McElhinny 1955: 31, 46, 96, 104)



FIGURE 42. Map of Italy with regions, highlighting Liguria, Tuscany, Calabria and Sicily.
Wikimedia Commons.

Italians

North Beach is widely associated with Italians, who have dominated the area for much of its history and who were primarily responsible for rebuilding the neighborhood after the earthquake and fire of 1906 — the neighborhood that is largely intact today. In this association, North Beach has been called Little Italy.

However, North Beach has also been called the Latin Quarter for its mix of people speaking Romance languages — Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese, and numerous dialects. The changing mix of people that merited the term Latin Quarter ended more or less in the ten years after the earthquake and fire when the Italians overwhelmingly predominated.

San Francisco's Little Italy was one of the largest and most important populations of immigrant Italians in the United States during the principle period of Italian immigration from the 1860s to the 1920s. "Of all cities in the United States, this was the only one in which both northern Italians and southerners were substantially represented." (Cinel 1982: 13) Most San Francisco immigrants came

from provinces in Liguria and Tuscany in the north and Calabria and Sicily in the south. Most were farmers or fishermen at home and tried to find similar work in the U.S. (**Figure 42**)

Immigration to San Francisco began before Italy was a nation, declared in 1861 and ratified in 1870, so that the first generations of arrivals did not consider themselves Italians, but natives of their regions, a situation reflected in many but not all entries in the U.S. census. Moreover, most did not speak or understand Italian but only their regional dialect. Most of these immigrants lived in small enclaves of North Beach with others from their region who spoke their language. They tended to marry, work with, and socialize with others from their region. In fact, the predominantly male population of the first decades often returned to the home village for a wife. People from one region looked down on those from other regions. People from each region tended to work in specific industries and would only hire each other, or hire others for inferior jobs. All of this was reinforced by a process of "chain migration" that brought streams of immigrants from specific villages and provinces to join their countrymen over a period of time. (Cinel 1982: 28, 119, *passim*.)

Many Italians arrived with nothing, not because they were poor but because they intended to return home

and had not sold their homes and farms in Italy. “At least until the early twentieth century, probably until the end of the First World War, most Italians considered their residence in the United States only temporary.” Because of this, they referred to their San Francisco neighborhood as a “colonia” or colony, the Italian Colony — “a temporary settlement created by people who would return to the mother country.” (Cinel 1982: 2, 112, 279)

In both the United States and Italy, California was presented “as another Italy,” having “similarities in climate and landscape” leading immigrants to expect to find the same work, mostly farming and fishing, as they had at home — but many had to adapt to new jobs. “In general, Italians in San Francisco lived near their work,” with major sources of employment at the north end of North Beach at Fishermen’s Wharf and various industrial establishments. “The North Beach Cannery was the city’s largest employer of Italians after the turn of the century.” **(Figure 43)** Near the south end of North Beach, many worked in the produce market. “The goal of most Italians who finally settled in San Francisco was to establish a business of their own,” but most just got jobs — like in Italy “they worked for other people.” (Cinel 1982: 15, 123, 134, 142)

Regionalism among San Francisco’s Italians began to fade after the earthquake, perhaps partly because of the shared experience. While regionalism persisted, other factors worked against it. Exclusion from large areas of American society was a force for a united community. Columbus Day, established in 1869, grew in importance as a day for all Italians. **(Figure 44)** Most important was the diminishing inclination to return to Italy and the acceptance of residence in the United States. Before the 1920s, large numbers did return to Italy, some more than once. One measure of the change was the increased immigration of women after World War I. (Dillon 1985: 3)

With the continuing influx of large numbers of immigrants in the 1920s, North Beach was at its most Italian from the end of World War I to the end of World War II. Indeed, the population grew so that the Marina district, built in the 1920s on the site of the PPIE, developed almost as an expansion of North Beach for wealthy Italians. San Francisco’s Italian population peaked in 1935 (Dillon 1985: 171), followed by new population movements: “People ordinarily moved from North Beach to the Mission District when they bought a house” — that is, when they could afford to leave a rented flat in North Beach. Also, children of immigrants “began leaving in large numbers in the mid 1930s.” (Cinel 1982: 122, 125)

The pivotal event in the acculturation of North Beach was World War II when Italy was a German ally against the United States: “The social transformation accelerated by the war, the defeat of fascism in Italy, the progressive departure from North Beach of the immigrant’s children, and the aging of the immigrants hastened the Americanization of the Italians and brought to a conclusion a century-long historical process.” The war was a difficult time in North Beach where there was much support for the Italian leader, Mussolini, which led to the removal from the city of “leading Italians with strong ties to Fascism,” and the temporary prohibition of alien Italians from the waterfront — from Fishermen’s Wharf. Another consequence was that many aliens became citizens in 1943-1945 to show their loyalty to the United States. (Cinel 1982: 196-197; Dillon 1985: 172-173)

With the first movement of Italians out of North Beach in the late 1930s, the traditionally low-cost housing remained cheap: rents in 1940 were still “among the lowest in town.” (Cinel 1982: 12)

While North Beach was long the undisputed center of Italian life and culture in San Francisco, there were many other neighborhoods in the city with concentrations of Italian people: the Outer Mission, Potrero, Excelsior, Bernal Heights, West Portal, Hunter’s Point, and the Richmond District. (Dillon 1985: 53) Italians in these other areas were connected to North Beach as well through its churches, institutions, and celebrations such as Columbus Day and the Blessing of the Fleet for fishermen.



FIGURE 43. North Beach Cannery, 21 June 1930, largest neighborhood employer.
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library (AAC-4696).



FIGURE 44. Early Columbus Day Parade.
J. B. Monaco (jbmonaco.com, Telegraph Hill and North Beach Photo Gallery, image 76 of 91).

Chinese

Like people from many other countries and cultures, Chinese people came to San Francisco during the Gold Rush. Many groups formed voluntary enclaves of residences and businesses; for example, Chileans, Australians, Germans, and Irish all formed small short-lived communities in what would later become the North Beach neighborhood in the 1850s.

In contrast, the Chinese settlement, which was called “Little Canton” in 1850, was the core of a permanent neighborhood, soon named Chinatown. It gradually became a largely involuntary enclave defined by anti-Chinese attitudes and public policies. In 1853, the city designated an official Boundary of Chinatown, encompassing the six blocks bordered by Kearny, Stockton, Sacramento, and Jackson streets. (McElhinny 1995: 35, 43)

Before the Chinese were effectively confined to Chinatown, at least three Chinese institutions were built in the general area that would later become North Beach: The Hook Tonk Tong Opera Theater was built on Dupont near Green in 1851; “the Yeung Wo district association was located somewhere on the southern slope of Telegraph Hill” in 1852; and the Ning Yung district association was located at what is now 527-529 Broadway in 1853. The Yeung Wo district association was described at the time as “a large frame structure . . . evidently Chinese architecture . . . with the entry guarded by a pair of lions carved in wood and the portico opening into a courtyard.” (Choy 2008: 2, 4)

The Chinese settlement was also shaped by American policies toward immigration. Until 1882, Chinese immigration to the United States was unrestricted; the Chinese population of San Francisco grew from 2,719 in 1860 to 21,745 in 1880. In 1882, the Chinese Exclusion Act prohibited immigration by laborers from China. Even so, Chinatown had grown so that in 1885 the city police commissioners redefined Chinatown, extending its boundaries south one half block below Sacramento Street and north one block to Pacific Avenue. (McElhinny 1995: 34-43)

The Chinese Exclusion Act and a follow up to that act in 1904 resulted in a decline in the Chinese population from a peak of 25,833 to 7,744 in 1920. The population also fell because most San Francisco Chinese were males; there were few women and few children were produced. The earliest male immigrants grew older and died. Some Chinese continued to come, however. While few Chinese had become citizens before they were classified as “aliens ineligible for citizenship” under the California Alien Land Law of 1913, the wives, sons, and daughters of citizens were allowed to come, called “paper sons” and the like for the paperwork or documentation they purchased asserting the family relationship of the immigrants to citizens. Then, in the 1920s, the population of Chinatown began to grow again as Chinese from other parts of California and elsewhere in the United States moved to San Francisco. The Chinese population of San Francisco, almost all of whom lived in Chinatown, grew to 16,303 in 1930 and 17,782 in 1940. (McElhinny 1995: 34-35)

World War II brought about changes in the legal status of the Chinese in America. Because China was an ally of the United States in the war with Japan, restrictions on Chinese immigration began to be lifted in 1943. In 1947, the Alien Land Law of 1913, which prohibited Chinese from owning real estate was repealed. Quotas kept the amount of immigration from China at 105 people annually — far lower than demand — until 1965 when 20,000 were allowed each year, 2,000 to 4,000 of whom came to Chinatown. (McElhinny 1995: 39-40; Nee 1993: 254)

With these changes, the Chinese population of San Francisco grew to 24,813 in 1950 and 36,445 in 1960. In this period for the first time, significant numbers of San Francisco Chinese began moving out of Chinatown, most of them to North Beach. Fair housing laws contributed to the availability of housing for the Chinese. (McElhinny 1995: 34, 41, 45-46) (**Figure 45**)



FIGURE 45. Chinese signs reflect population changes north of Broadway in the early 1970s. San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library (AAB-2967).

Significant among those who moved to North Beach in the 1950s was Him Mark Lai, an internationally renowned historian of Chinese-American history and prolific writer. Born in Chinatown in 1925, Lai was a community activist, joining the Chinese American Democratic Youth League, or Mun Ching, where he met Laura Jung, his future wife. Following FBI investigations during the McCarthy era of the 1950s, Mun Ching changed its name to the Chinese American Youth Club (CAYC). The Lais moved to 357 Union Street in North Beach (see Figure 29), providing a place for these club members to meet and becoming the hub of Chinese-American history. A master archivist, his extensive collection of Chinese-American history housed at 357 Union Street included 10,000 books, 400-linear feet of research clippings and 100 boxes of news clippings. Lai published 10 books, more than 100 essays, and research in English and Chinese on all aspects of Chinese-American life. Lai also curated several exhibits and taught courses in Chinese-American history at San Francisco State University, University of California, Berkeley, and City College of San Francisco. Lai was known as the “Dean of Chinese American History” by his peers. (Wong 2015: 3) His best known publication is *Island: Poetry and History*

of Chinese Immigrants on Angel Island, 1910-1940, which translated the Chinese poetry found on the walls of the Angel Island Immigration Station. The book also contained excerpts of interviews with those who had been on Angel Island as a result of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act. His extensive library collection is now archived at U.C. Berkeley’s Ethnic Studies Library. (Monaghan 2000: A21-A22) The Chinatown Branch Library was renamed the Chinatown/Him Mark Lai Library in 2011. (Wong 2015: 3)

The biggest increase in San Francisco’s Chinese population came after 1965, rising to 58,896 in 1970, 82,480 in 1980, and 127,140 in 1990. Although Chinese lived in many parts of the city, Chinatown itself rose to its highest population and most extreme overcrowding. (McElhinny 1995: 34)

Broadway was long considered a dividing line between North Beach and Chinatown. However, even before 1940, there were a few Chinese living north of Broadway. (McElhinny 1995: 46) After World War II, as Italians moved out of North Beach, Chinese moved in, first as residents and property owners and later as business owners. The Chinese reached 40% of the population of North Beach in 1977 and 66% in 1990. (McElhinny 1995: 88, 95-96, 104)

Bohemians: Beats and Their Antecedents

North Beach has long been associated with San Francisco's widely recognized tradition of accommodating Bohemians and Bohemianism, with Bohemians considered to be writers, artists, and others who reject conventional social norms and seek to express new visions of life or society.

One of San Francisco's earliest recognized Bohemian places was Coppa's restaurant, located on the southern fringe of North Beach at the foot of Columbus Avenue in the Montgomery Block, demolished in 1959. Before 1900, Coppa's provided the essential ingredients for Bohemian life — good cheap food and wine that attracted artists and literary people, in this case Jack London, George Sterling, and Will Irwin. (Smith 2005: 188) "Bohemia moved onto the hill in the 1890s and stayed through the 'lawless decade' of the 1920s," also involving Joaquin Miller, Ina Coolbrith, Rudolf Friml, and Edwin Booth. (Gentry 1962: 96, 101)

According to a 1914 book, *Bohemian San Francisco* by Clarence Edwards, "San Francisco holds no more interesting district than that lying around the base of Telegraph Hill, and extending over toward North Beach [i.e., the north waterfront], even as far as Fishermen's Wharf." Edwards noted the mix of people and languages, the Italians with their food shops and restaurants, and the notable people who had been attracted to the neighborhood: writers Bret Harte and Mark Twain, and painters William Keith who had a studio there and Giuseppe Cadenasso and Xavier Martinez who lived there.

Because of the cheap rents and the proximity of North Beach restaurants, "Around 1920 artists and would-be artists began to occupy the Hill, and Harry Laffler's famous Compound on Montgomery Street was a center for the Bohemian life." When a road was built to the top of Telegraph Hill in 1921, "some picturesque artists studios" were demolished. The Rudolf Schaeffer School of Design, founded in 1926, was located on Telegraph Hill from 1950 until 1960. (Myrick 2001: 24, 173)

In addition to periodic influxes of Bohemians in the neighborhood, there have been recurring laments about the end of Bohemianism. A *New York Times* article in 1936 noted "San Francisco's Historic Bohemian Quarter Succumbs To the Forces of Economics and Modernism," a process caused by construction of modern apartment buildings. "With the passing of the old shacks, their artistically minded tenants are fading out of the picture too," driven out by "baygazers" (newcomers who can afford the rising rents). (White 1936)

In 1939, Charles Caldwell Dobie took the opposite point of view, complaining that Bohemians were displacing the Italians: "How long the Italians will dominate the hill is problematic. Already signs of disintegration have made their appearance. The curse of a bastard bohemianism which wrecked Greenwich Village in New York and which lies in wait to destroy the grace and charm of any natural expression of life has reared its ugly head not only on the Hill but over the whole North Beach area. Tea-houses with glittering candles stuck in empty claret bottles have opened their doors . . ." (Dobie 1939: 181)

As cheap wine was one of the ingredients of Bohemianism, Prohibition (1919-1933) was its enemy. But wine may have remained easily available in North Beach in part because of the persisting practice of wine making in the basement by many Italian families. (Edwards called this "Chateau la Feet" in *Bohemian San Francisco* 1914: 72) The record of police raids on commercial operations at 310 and 683 Green Street, at the end of Kohler Place, and at 1516 Stockton Street indicate that alcohol was available.

The Landmark Designation Case Report for City Lights Booksellers and Publishers prepared by Nancy J. Peters, Nancy C. Shanahan and G. Bland Platt, dated March 2001 documents the history of Bohemians and Beats in North Beach. According to the case report:

After World War II, a number of writers and artists migrated to San Francisco. Returning GIs brought home with them a new interest in foreign cultures, San Francisco stepped up its commercial contacts with Asia, and the City was then open to many outside cultural influences offering a receptive environment for radicals, anarchists, communists, populists, Wobblies, abstract expressionist painters, and experimental theater. Jazz and bebop began revolutionizing music. Writers who were conscientious objectors (CO) and interned at the Waldport, Oregon CO camp came down on furlough to meet with Bay Area writers. Kenneth Rexroth arrived and set out to turn San Francisco into a literary center with his salons and other activities. The anarchist Liberation Circle met for big parties at Fugazi Hall at 678 Green Street in North Beach, where the writers and artists of the Rexroth group were joined by a wider social spectrum -- old Italian anarchists, longshoremen, doctors, cab drivers and professors. The San Francisco School of Fine Arts, now the Art Institute (San Francisco Landmark No. 85) at 800 Chestnut in North Beach, together with San Francisco State College Poetry Center (now San Francisco State University), launched public poetry events and literary discussions. (Peters 2001: 5)

In 1953, Lawrence Ferlinghetti and Peter D. Martin co-founded City Lights Bookstore at 261 Columbus Avenue (Landmark No. 228) (**Figure 46**), the nation's first all-paperback bookstore, which quickly became a gathering place for Bay Area writers, poets, artists and performers in neighborhood clubs, who would eventually be known as the Beats. Poets and writers associated with City Lights included Allen Ginsburg, Jack Kerouac, William Burroughs, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Gregory Corso, Kenneth Rexroth, Gary Snyder, Phillip Lamantia, Michael McClure, Bob Kaufman, and Phillip Whalen.

The Landmark Designation Case Report for City Lights Booksellers and Publishers described the impact of the Beats on American literature and culture as follows:

The City's Beat writers, during the late 1950s and early 1960s, had a monumental effect on American literature and culture in their impassioned challenge of established styles and forms. One thinks of the Impressionists in Paris and their "Salon des Refuses," or the public outcry against Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* in the context of Allen Ginsberg's "Howl." The impact of the Beat movement went beyond the boundaries of literature and into a larger political and social arena. (Peters 2001: 7)

"The term 'Beat' has an uncertain origin. It may have derived from the argot of black jazzmen, or from the blissful illumination of religious beatitude, or from a sense of wariness with the emerging military-industrial complex against which these young artists were rebelling." (Peters 2001: 8) The Beats were first noticed by the public in 1958. (Myrick 2001: 125) Herb Caen was "the first to use [beatnik] in print," perhaps from overhearing Bob Kaufman talking at Specs on Adler Place. (Morgan 2003: 80)

Attracted by City Lights, writers and artists resided in North Beach for various periods of time and frequented its bars, cafes, and restaurants, especially on Columbus Avenue, Grant Avenue, and Broadway. Well-known bars frequented by the Beats were Vesuvio Cafe at 255 Columbus Avenue, Specs' 12 Adler Place at 12 William Saroyan Place (formerly Adler Place), Gino and Carlo's at 548 Green Street, and Tosca at 242 Columbus Avenue. They performed at The Cellar at 576 Green Street, the Coffee Gallery at 1353 Grant Avenue, The Place at 1546 Grant Avenue, Fugazi Hall at 678 Green Street (now Beach Blanket Babylon Boulevard) (see Figure A46), Anxious Asp at 528 Green Street, as well as private homes. Restaurants included Hotel du Midi at 15 Romolo Place, the Pisa at 1268 Grant Avenue, the Old Spaghetti Factory at 478 Green Street (Landmark No. 127), the Iron Pot at 639 Montgomery Avenue (demolished), the Black Cat at 710 Montgomery Avenue, Enrico's at 504 Broadway, and other North Beach family-style, all-you-can-

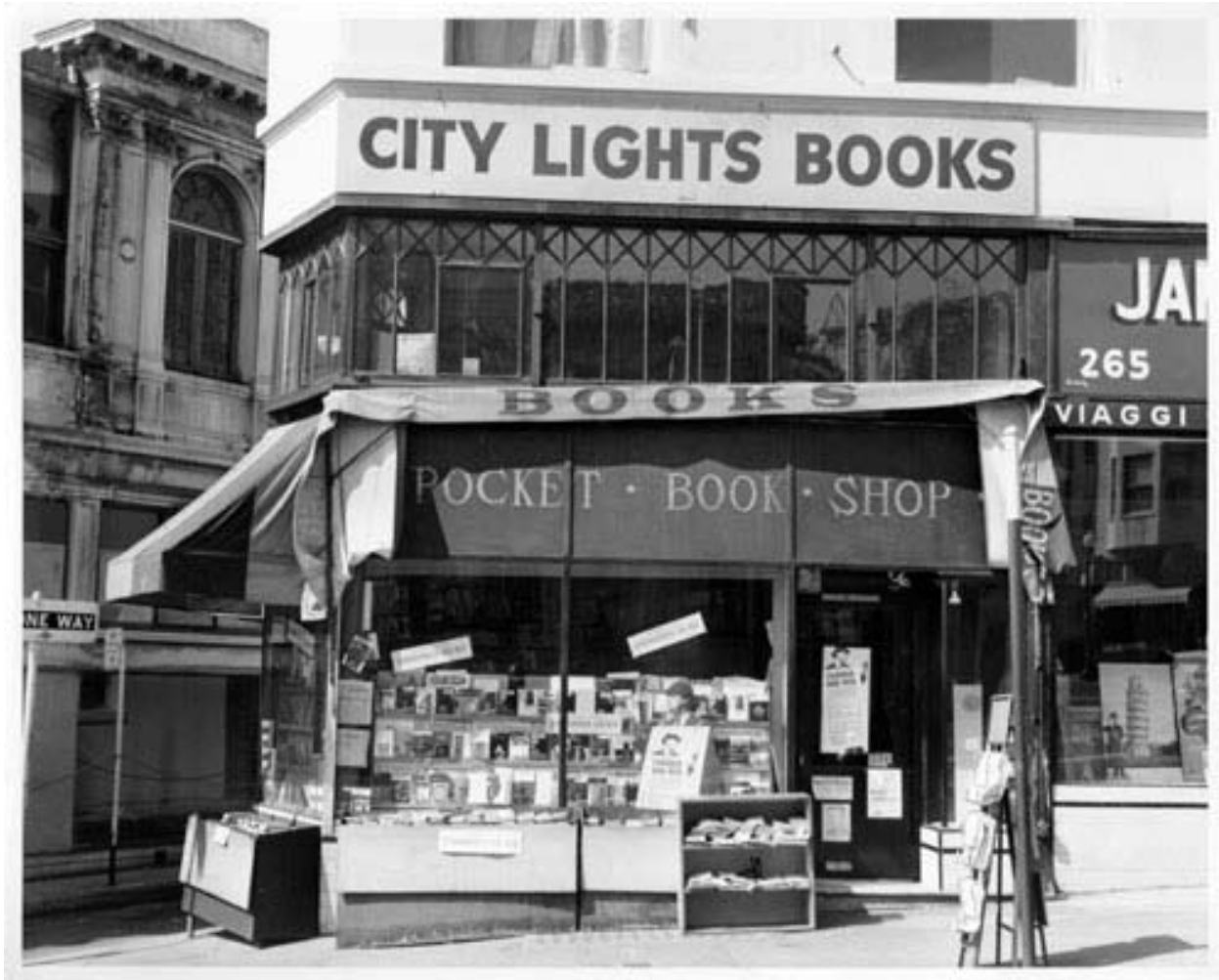


FIGURE 46. City Lights Bookstore, 261-71 Columbus Ave., 1950's.
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library (AAD-3374).

eat places. They also hung out at the Co-Existence Bagel Shop at 1398 Grant Avenue, Caffè Trieste at 601 Vallejo Street, the Bread and Wine Mission at 501 Greenwich Street, Mike's Pool Hall at 523 Broadway, and the Discovery Book Shop at 245 Columbus Avenue. Among musicians, Dave Brubeck, Lu Watters, and Turk Murphy "all made their reputations here." (Benet 1963: 90) Among clubs for jazz and comedy were the hungry i at 599 Jackson Street, the Purple Onion at 140 Columbus Avenue, the Jazz Workshop at 471-73 Broadway, Keystone Korner at 750 Vallejo, and El Matador at 492 Broadway.

Bill Morgan's guide, *The Beat Generation in San Francisco*, documents not only the well-known clubs, bars, and public places of the Beat era, but also the flats, apartments, and hotel rooms where leading figures lived, such as 1010 Montgomery Street, where Allen Ginsberg lived while writing *Howl*. (Morgan 2003)

The period of significance for Beats in North Beach begins about 1950. "Although opinions vary as to when the Beat era ended, most literary scholars set the date at around 1965, when many of the writers that had gathered regularly at the City Lights Bookstore and other bohemian haunts abandoned North Beach, which they saw as having become commercialized by trading on the 'Beat/bohemian culture.'" (Peters 2001:8)

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer

North Beach has been identified as a potential San Francisco historic district for its numerous sites associated with gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) history in San Francisco, which has been significant in a national context as “the primary location where sexuality became the basis for mobilizing community rights and cultural recognition in the twentieth century.” (Scott 2004: 1)

According to the final draft Historic Context Statement, *Sexing the City: The Development of Sexual Identity Based Subcultures in San Francisco, 1933-1979*, dated 17 June 2004, prepared by Damon Scott for the Friends of 1800:

With the repeal of Prohibition in 1933, zones of nighttime entertainments emerged where even older vice districts had existed and provided the relatively open social environment for sexual and gender transgressions to flourish. The 1930s saw the rapid growth of nightlife on and near Broadway which became the central artery of the city’s vice and tourist districts—North Beach. Establishments catering to a whole range of desires emerged, reviving the area’s earlier association with the adult entertainments of the Barbary Coast. Homosexual and transgender populations defined a vibrant and publicly visible culture that commingled with the nighttime entertainments of adventurous tourists and heterosexual residents. The close association of the district with the tourist industry cemented the city’s reputation as a ‘wide open town’ and provided a monetary incentive to continue to promote the area as a zone of sexual license. In this climate, a number of bars opened their doors and began attracting gay and lesbian clientele. The first—and longest running—was Finocchio’s [406 Stockton Street (1929-37); 506 Broadway (1937-99)], a former speakeasy that showcased female impersonation and contributed to the city’s reputation as a center of bohemian culture. As a venue for gender transgressive performances, Finocchio’s became a gathering place for San Franciscans and tourists seeking an alternative to prevailing expectations of gender and sexual conformity. Over the course of seventy years, Finocchio’s contributed to the development of the city’s vibrant gay, lesbian and transgender public culture. **(Figure 47)** Other nightspots were soon established in North Beach, most notably Mona’s—the city’s first lesbian establishment [431 Union Street (1934-35)]—and the Black Cat [710 Montgomery Street (1933-63)].

World War II was a transformative event for both the city as a whole and its relationship to newly emerging sexual subcultures. . . . Military service and wartime labor drew masses of people away from the familiarity of their customary lives and into new single sex environments where the normal rules for social interaction were sometimes overlooked. For some who felt the pull of same sex desire these new social settings facilitated homosexual encounters. As a major military and industrial center for wartime mobilization, San Francisco’s existing adult entertainment districts of North Beach and the Tenderloin became important gathering places for gays and lesbians. The number of gay bars and restaurants grew in the city along with the new influx of soldiers and war-related laborers. . . . In North Beach, a number of new bars opened during World War II and in the period after to cater to a predominantly lesbian clientele, including: Tommy’s Place [529 Broadway (1952-55)], 12 Adler Place [12 Adler Place (1956-present)], Ann’s 440 [440 Broadway (1952-62)], Miss Smith’s Tea Room [1353 Grant Ave (1954-60)], the Tin Angel [986 Embarcadero (1954-60)], the Copper Lantern [1335 Grant Avenue (1955-65)], the Anxious Asp [528 Green Street (1958-67)], and the Front [600 Front Street (1959-61)]. (Scott 2004: 3, 5)

In addition to those places mentioned above, the historic context statement identifies the following “North Beach Queer Bars and Restaurants, 1933-1965”: multiple locations for Mona’s at 140 Columbus Ave (1936-38), 440 Broadway (1939-49), and 473 Broadway (1948-57); the 299 Club (Tommy’s) at 299 Broadway (1951-54); Opus One at 141 Columbus Avenue (1952-58); the Chi Chi Club at 467 Broadway (1949-56); and the Paper Doll at 524 Union Street (1949-61). (Scott 2004: 17)

Building on the work of Damon Scott, Donna J. Graves and Shayne E. Watson prepared the *Citywide Historic Context Statement For LGBTQ History in San Francisco* for the City and County San Francisco dated October 2015 (“LGBTQ Context Statement”). It identifies North Beach as San Francisco’s first bar-based LGBTQ community.

According to Graves and Watson:

As gay and lesbian bars and restaurants appeared in North Beach and Telegraph Hill, more men and women moved to the neighborhood, creating the city’s first queer residential enclave and establishing the roots of San Francisco’s LGBTQ communities....Between 1933 and 1965, over twenty nightclubs, bars, and restaurants catering to gay, lesbian, and transgender people opened in North Beach.
(Graves 2015:59)

Out of dozens of LGBTQ North Beach establishments mentioned in the LGBTQ Context Statement, some of the earliest and most significant queer spaces in San Francisco are documented in detail, including Finocchio’s, Mona’s 440 Club, and the Black Cat Cafe, along with their associated events and individuals. In addition to individually significant resources, it recognizes North Beach as a potential historic district as a neighborhood that holds clusters of extant resources. (Graves 2015:58-82)



FIGURE 47. Finocchio’s Nightclub, 506 Broadway, 1964.
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library (AAB-1189).

Social Life

Settlement Houses and Kindergartens

Squalid conditions caused by poverty, especially among immigrant groups, drew the attention of social reformers to North Beach beginning in the 1870s and 1880s. Although some, like the Italian Ladies Aid Society, organized by 1875 (Dillon 1985: 63), arose from North Beach, the best known reformers were educated upper middle class women from elite neighborhoods, influenced by responses to similar conditions in cities throughout the country.

In the early years of this movement, social reformers operated with money from private philanthropies. Influenced by Hull House in Chicago and other settlement houses around the country, the characteristic institutions of the movement were settlement houses and kindergartens. (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 2 September 1894)

A settlement house was a neighborhood welfare institution, typically located in a building with residential quarters both for social workers and people in need of help, dining facilities, classrooms, recreation facilities, and other spaces. Kindergartens, which were not yet provided by the public schools, were sometimes located in settlement houses and sometimes in separate facilities.

In 1879 Sarah B. Cooper opened her first free kindergarten for poor children in the city's South-of-Market district on Silver Street (now Stillman Street). Its popularity led to a second kindergarten started by Cooper on Union Street in North Beach in 1880. Cooper's work attracted the attention of Jane Stanford and Phoebe Hearst who endowed three kindergartens and one kindergarten, respectively. These formed the core of the Cooper's Golden Gate Kindergarten Association, for which Phoebe Hearst served as honorary president. It grew to forty-six kindergarten classrooms around the city in ten years. (Willard 1897: 346-347; Swett 1911: n.p.)

In 1899, the Hearst Free Kindergarten was at 512 Union Street. In 1902, the property was sold and the kindergarten moved to a new three-story brick building on a larger site in the same block, at 560 Union Street, which was built by Phoebe Hearst for teacher training and kindergarten classes, and to house the Golden Gate Kindergarten Association offices. This building was destroyed in 1906. After a temporary replacement, Phoebe Hearst built a new wood building in 1911: "This building, at 570 Union, was the headquarters of the Golden Gate Kindergarten Association until 1965, when it moved to 1315 Ellis Street and the property was sold for an apartment house." (Myrick 2001: 175) Today in North Beach, the kindergarten, if not the site, is memorialized in the name of the Cooper Child Development Center at 2021-27 Taylor Street, named for Sarah B. Cooper, the first director of the Hearst Kindergarten.

By 1913, services related to those of the kindergarten movement were also provided in North Beach by the Children's Day Home, an organization that began on Post Street by 1878 and expanded into North Beach at 1441 Powell Street. The Children's Day Home, operated by the Sisters of the Holy Family, an order of Roman Catholic nuns founded in San Francisco, was a place where working mothers could leave their children during the day. (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 16 July 1911) It was also sometimes referred to as an orphanage. (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 31 July 1896) The Sanborn maps of 1913 and 1949 showed the Children's Day Home operating in the same two-story and basement building at 1441 Powell Street.

Although kindergartens were established in North Beach before settlement houses, with their broader set of goals, the first settlement house in the City was established in the neighborhood. The organization "had its beginning in 1888 when two ladies set out to help impoverished immigrants in the city." These women, Elizabeth H. Ashe and Alice S. Griffith (who later was active in housing reform), formed a group called the

Willing Circle in 1890; shortly, the Willing Circle became the City Front Association. At first active south of Market and “in Silver Star Hall at Sansome and Pacific” near North Beach, in 1902 the women formed the Telegraph Hill Neighborhood House at 427 Vallejo Street, near the top of Telegraph Hill. They provided first-aid and housekeeping classes. The Telegraph Hill Sorosis Club, “an evening club for working girls,” met in the Neighborhood House. Summer trips to the country were organized for neighborhood children. (Myrick 2001: 131-132)

In 1905, the group moved down the hill to 650 Filbert Street with a dispensary at 536 Green Street. When facilities on these sites were destroyed in 1906, the organization bought a new lot at 1736 Stockton Street. For this site, a new Neighborhood House was designed by Bernard Maybeck, completed in 1907. **(Figure 48)** This building held homemaking classes and a health clinic; Alice Griffith organized her campaign for housing reform here; and the Neighborhood Improvement Club was organized “to interest mothers in civic matters in the neighborhood.” (Myrick 2001: 133-134) Still extant, it is now used for offices.

Another settlement house, the People’s Place, merged with the Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Association in 1920. The combined group was known briefly as the San Francisco Neighborhood Association “until reverting to the former name.” (Myrick 2001: 134)

By the 1950s, when the The Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Association had outgrown its Stockton Street location, Ashe and Griffith led a successful campaign to build its current center at 660 Lombard where the organization still operates 128 years after it was first established.

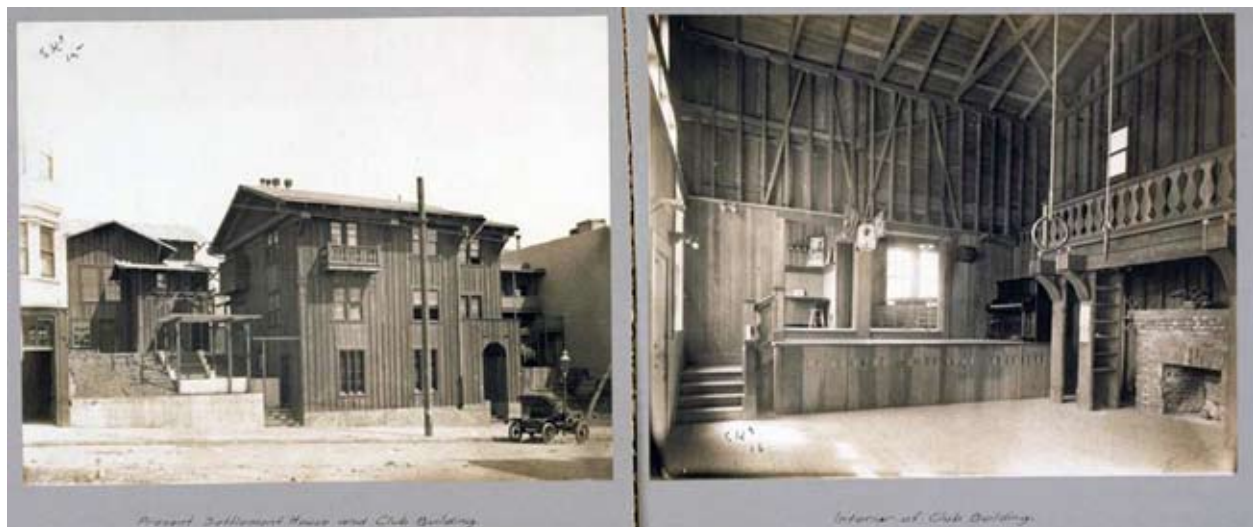


FIGURE 48. Social Settlements: Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Association, 1736 Stockton St., 1907. Harvard Art Museums/Fogg Museum, transfer from the Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, Social Museum Collection, Record Identifier: HUAM152601soc.

Voluntary Societies

The history of North Beach bears out de Tocqueville’s often cited observation that voluntary societies flourished in America and were formed for every conceivable purpose. In his book *Democracy In America* (1840), de Tocqueville stated that “Americans group together to hold fêtes, found seminaries, build inns, construct churches, distribute books, dispatch missionaries to the antipodes. They establish hospitals, prisons, schools by the same method. Finally, if they wish to highlight a truth or develop an opinion by the encouragement of a great example, they form an association” (Tocqueville 1840: 596) Two of the most comprehensive historians of North Beach, Dino Cinel and Richard Dillon, scanned the landscape of

North Beach societies and found numerous examples of various types including military guards, regional and national societies, mutual benefit societies, social clubs, athletic clubs, fraternal organizations, art and cultural societies, etc., many of them with overlapping purposes. In 1918, the Italian Federation of California was created to coordinate the common interests of many of these groups. (Dillon 1985: 167)

Few of these societies at any time had their own building or meeting hall. Most rented large halls in North Beach or nearby, and many rented club rooms for their day-to-day business and record keeping.

Perhaps the first meeting hall to serve the neighborhood was Apollo Hall built on Pacific Avenue near Stockton Street in 1853. It was demolished in 1880 (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 22 March 1880), rebuilt at 810 Pacific Avenue, and destroyed again in 1906. Closer to the heart of North Beach was Washington Square Hall at the southwest corner of Union and Stockton streets facing Washington Square by 1891. The 1899 Sanborn map showed it as a large wood building with ground floor stores and a high second floor meeting space. Behind it at 607 Union Street was a three-story wood building with lodge rooms. Thus, many groups with their own lodge room had access to the adjacent hall for large meetings. The building was at least briefly referred to as Bersaglieri Hall. (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 17 March 1891)

Tenants in these buildings would have included mutual aid societies, first for people with regional Italian affiliations — people from Lucca, Genoa, Calabria, or Sicily, for example. Later, people were attracted to groups open to all Italians such as masonic lodges, Italian veterans groups, the Sons of Italy, and others. Either way, according to Cinel, “The mutual aid societies provided free medical assistance, unemployment compensation, and burial . . . They also became the center of social life for immigrants, establishing recreational centers from the outset . . . The more affluent societies invested large sums of money in their centers. The Compagnia Garibaldina and the Compagnia dei Bersaglieri, for instance, took great pride in their halls in the 400 block of Broadway.” (Cinel 1982: 204)

The Compagnia Garibaldina, otherwise known as the Garibaldi Guard, was founded in 1870 as a military drill team and benevolent fraternal organization. Reminiscent of Garibaldi soldiers in the Civil War, they wore army uniforms, and had weekly military drills, parading down Broadway in their redshirts. The Garibaldi Guards had mutual aid auxiliaries which sponsored fund drives and raised money by having balls and various social gatherings during the year. (Gumina 1978: 165) A series of *Chronicle* articles indicated the significance of the Garibaldi Guard in the years after the earthquake. In 1910, for example, an article described “The annual ball of the Garibaldi Guard [as] the biggest social event of the year on the Beach.” (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 16 February 1910)

The 1913 Sanborn maps showed numerous halls and club rooms scattered around North Beach. Among these, Garibaldi Hall at 435-443 Broadway (**Figure 49**), was shown as a two-story wood building with a hall on the second floor and lodge rooms. Other principal halls were the Italian Club at 619-621 Union Street (a reconstruction of Washington Square Hall), Fugazi Hall at 674-678 Green Street (see Figure A46), and the Knights of Pythias Hall at 1524 Powell Street. Three other buildings were shown with club rooms on upper floors: 1315 Stockton Street, 1400 Powell Street, and 1469-1481 Stockton Street.

Fugazi Hall, formally known as Casa Coloniale Italiana John F. Fugazi, is a steel frame structure built in 1913, designed by Italo Zanolini. In addition to a theater, it provided rooms for important North Beach organizations serving the Italian community including the After School Club, the After Work Club, the Italian Legion, the Italian Sport Club, the library of the Dante Alighieri Society, and the Italian-American Community Services Agency (formerly known as the Italian Board of Relief and the Italian-American Welfare Agency). The Italian-American Community Services Agency, which celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2016, is still serving the Italian community from its Fugazi Hall location.



FIGURE 49. Garibaldi Hall on the left, on the south side of Broadway looking west, 1944.
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library (AAB-2960).

The 1949 Sanborn maps reflected major changes in the location and character of North Beach halls and club rooms. The Italian Club at 619-621 Union Street had been taken over by a restaurant, the Knights of Pythias Hall had become the Cathay Hall of the American Legion — a Chinese organization. The three buildings on Stockton and Powell streets where there had been numerous club rooms were all replaced by new buildings with different purposes.

In addition, there were two new club or hall buildings, both on the east side of Stockton Street facing Washington Square. At 1600-1614 Stockton Street (northeast corner of Union Street) a new three-story steel and reinforced concrete building housed lodge rooms and offices over stores. Next door at 1620-1630 Stockton Street a new reinforced concrete hall was built for the Italian Athletic Club in 1936.

One club that has played an important role in North Beach while being located outside the neighborhood, the Vittoria Colonna Club, a women's organization, most of whose members were the wives of successful Italian men in San Francisco. The club was formed in 1910. (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 26 January 1913) It was involved in issues of women's rights, education, care of children, health care, war relief, and citizenship. It met at the Richelieu Hotel at Van Ness Avenue and Geary Boulevard from 1910 to 1917, and afterwards in rented club rooms in various places outside of North Beach.

Churches

Neighborhood churches in North Beach were important centers for cultural and social activities, as well as places to attend mass and receive sacraments.

The National Shrine of Saint Francis of Assisi at 620 Vallejo Street (**Figure 50**) was founded in 1849 as San Francisco's first Roman Catholic church after Mission Dolores. As such, it was the first Roman Catholic Church in San Francisco for an English speaking congregation. In this parish were the first parochial school in San Francisco and the first ordination of priests. The cornerstone was laid in 1857 and the building was dedicated in 1860. Except for stucco, spires, mullions, and glass, the reconstruction after the 1906 earthquake and fire kept most of the original fabric. The building is San Francisco Landmark No. 5.

Located at 906 Broadway at Mason Street, Our Lady of Guadalupe Church (**Figure 51**) was first constructed between 1875 and 1880. The original church was destroyed in 1906 earthquake and fire. A temporary structure was built on the same site by October 1906. This was followed by a new building on the site, designed by Shea & Lofquist, in 1911 and completed in 1912. As stated in the *Draft Landmark Designation Amendment for Iglesia de Nuestra Senora/Our Lady of Guadalupe Roman Catholic Church* (Landmark No. 204), dated December 2018, prepared by the San Francisco Planning Department:

[The church] is significant for its association with the development of San Francisco's Latino and Spanish-speaking communities from the late-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century, as both the geographical and spiritual heart of the Latino and Spanish-speaking enclave that existed in North Beach until the 1950's. (San Francisco Planning 2018:3)

Iglesia de Nuestra Senora is also significant for its design and as the work of a master. It was one of the first churches in the country to be constructed of reinforced concrete, considered an innovative construction technology at the time, and is an exceptional example of an early twentieth century Mission Revival church with a highly ornate interior displaying Renaissance and Baroque ornamentation. The church is the work of master architects, Shea & Lofquist, and its interior murals are the work of master artist, Luigi Brusatori. (San Francisco Planning 2018:4)

Saints Peter and Paul Church, known as "The Italian National Church," was founded in 1884 as a separate parish for the City's Italians (see Figure 36). Staffed since 1897 by the Salesians, an order serving Italians all over the world, it has been regarded as "the most important agency and social center for the entire



FIGURE 50. St. Francis of Assisi Church,
610 Vallejo St. Dedicated in 1860.
Photo: noehill.com.



FIGURE 51. Our Lady of Guadalupe Church,
906 Broadway. Completed in 1912.
Photo: sfgate.com.

Italian Colony of San Francisco.” (Gumina 1978: 183) Originally on the corner of Filbert Street and Dupont Street (now Grant Avenue), it was rebuilt at 650 Filbert Street on Washington Square following the 1906 earthquake and fire starting in 1912 and was completed in 1924. The church continues to serve the community with a parochial school, active boys’ and girl’s club, the annual blessing of the fishing fleet, and various adult organizations. The church has also become the home church for the Chinese American Roman Catholic population. Today it provides masses in English, Italian and Cantonese. Located prominently on the principal open space in North Beach, Washington Square, its physical presence and character support its social and cultural role as a center of the community.

COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

Making and Selling

The dense development of North Beach was predominantly residential — houses, flats, hotels, and apartments — but on and near the main streets of the neighborhood the ground floors of most buildings, whether residential or otherwise, were rented for non-residential uses. These main streets — Columbus, Broadway, Stockton, and Grant — were lined with all kinds of businesses, a wider range of businesses than existed in the years after the city’s first zoning ordinance, enacted in 1921, took full effect. **(Figure 52)** While the majority of businesses before 1921, labeled “S” on Sanborn maps, were “stores,” many were what would later be called “light industrial.”

To understand the character of business in North Beach, both before and after the 1921 zoning ordinance, it is helpful to look at the changing uses of common words that represent various types of business. In particular, the words store, storehouse, shop, and workshop. These words sometimes had different meanings in the early twentieth century. They also had meanings that sometimes overlapped. Altogether, their meanings reflect a range of uses that would change after 1921.

The common word “store” had a wider meaning before 1921. Whereas by the middle decades of the twentieth century in the U.S., the first definition of store was “a place where goods are kept for sale; a shop”



FIGURE 52. Libreria Italiana and Cavalli Book Store.
J. B. Monaco (jbmonaco.com, Telegraph Hill and North Beach Photo Gallery, image 69 of 91).

(Barnhart 1966: 1192), in the first decades of the twentieth century this meaning was secondary. The first use given by Russell Sturgis in his 1902 *Dictionary of Architecture and Building* was “a place for the storing of goods of any kind; in this sense, nearly equivalent to Storehouse . . . [or] warehouse,” and second was “a place for the exhibition and sale of goods; a shop.” (Sturgis 1989: 658) *The Century Dictionary* defined store first of all as “that which is provided or furnished for use as needed . . .” and gave only as a fourth meaning, “a place where goods are kept for sale by either wholesale or retail; a shop.” (Whitney 1906: 5969) As a place for storage, a store was a section of a larger building while a storehouse was a building whose use was entirely for storage and a warehouse was a secure storehouse for the most valuable goods. (Sturgis 1989: 658, 1021)

Thus, North Beach before 1921 had numerous stores or shops where goods that were stored on the premises were also sold on the premises such as dry-goods stores, hardware stores (**Figure 53**), book stores, liquor stores, and drug stores (restaurants, saloons, and other types of businesses that occupied the same spaces are treated separately in this report under Entertainment and Vice). There were also places for storage alone, sometimes called out on the Sanborn maps if they represented a particular potential for fire, such as “furniture storage and repair,” a combination of activities that included a workshop for making repairs.

If store and shop were defined as equivalent terms, with “store” more common in the U.S. and “shop” in Britain, each has different secondary associations. If store is associated with storage, shop is associated with workshop. Sturgis defined shop first as “a place where goods are offered for sale” and second as “a place in which work is done; usually distinguished from a factory by the smaller number of workmen employed or the less extensive use of machinery.” (Sturgis 1989: 495) *The Century Dictionary* brought the



FIGURE 53. Fiorio and Figone Hardware, 1349 Grant Ave., 1923.
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library (AAK-1567).

two meanings together: “a booth or stall where wares were usually both made and displayed for sale . . . a room or building in which the making, preparing, or repairing of any article is carried on, or in which any industry is pursued: as, a machine-shop; a repair-shop; a barber’s-shop; a carpenter’s shop.” (Whitney 1906: 5585) **(Figure 54)**



FIGURE 54. Women workers (“Luisa and Margareta”) 1933, Salon “Venezia” on Green St.
Glenn D. Koch Collection.

Before 1921, there were many shops in North Beach where work was done, such as tin shops, blacksmiths, laundries, plumbers, carpenters, upholsterers, paint dealers, bicycle repairing, machine shops, electrical supplies, feed mills, undertakers, a crematory, an accordion factory, ravioli factories, macaroni factories, a sausage factory, candy factories, coal and wood dealers. Of course all of these involve storage of materials as well, blurring the lines between shop and store.

One notable case of this type was the Guerrini Accordion Factory, established in 1903 and located from about 1915 to 1968 at the southwest corner of Columbus and Broadway 277-79 Columbus Avenue in the top floor loft space of the three-story building (extant). San Francisco was the center of American accordion manufacturing in the early twentieth century. (Layer 2007)

Workshops were places where physical work was done, hard physical labor and skilled labor, rather than the lighter work that involved bookkeeping and social interactions in stores. The physical labor of workshops was more often done by men than by women, it did not require that the workers be literate, or that they speak English.

Most of these places of business, whether shops or stores, catered largely to neighborhood needs and, as the census records indicate, they were places of employment for people in the neighborhood. **(Figure 55)**

While most places of business were on the ground floors of larger residential buildings, several were in one-story wood buildings, probably built right after the fire and assumed to be temporary. In either case, retail



FIGURE 55. Carlo and Benito, North Beach Bakery, 1501 Grant Ave., 1932.
Glenn D. Koch Collection.

establishments were designed to attract customers: “The term Shop Front is in common use in America for the glass door, show windows, etc., of what is otherwise called a store. This has become an important part of street architecture in modern cities . . .” Interior store spaces in North Beach were generally rectangular unless they were located in buildings whose property lines were shaped by the diagonal of Columbus Avenue. For some types of business, there was an advantage in being located so that there were secondary entrances from side or rear streets or alleys. Many of these spaces were high enough to include a mezzanine level. Little is known about interior finishes in early North Beach stores. While Sturgis said, “The interior and exterior of modern shops are often costly and treated with a good deal of architectural pretension,” (Sturgis 1989: 495) this comment probably applied more to wealthier districts.

While retail establishments were designed to be attractive, storage businesses “were not usually the subject of careful architectural treatment; they are likely to be extremely plain and bare buildings . . .” (Sturgis 1989: 658); the same would have been true of places intended as workshops. However, while some buildings and spaces were intended for specific purposes, many of them were initially interchangeable, equally suitable for rent as a liquor store or a carpenter’s workshop. Thus, most commercial spaces in North Beach were originally designed with the same storefronts of plate glass windows over bulkheads; transoms, prism glass, or other special glass above the storefronts; an iron frame across the storefront based on a classical order; and a plain interior. (See the description of character-defining features of storefronts on page 140.)

Today, the commercial corridors of North Beach remain little changed from the time of their reconstruction after the 1906 earthquake and fire. For example, Grant Avenue between Columbus Avenue and Filbert Street retains its pattern of tightly packed buildings with interdependent housing and small shops, as do the corridors along Columbus Avenue, Broadway, Stockton Street, Green Street, and Powell Street. While the pre-earthquake commercial areas have continued in commercial use since the earthquake and fire, the businesses themselves have expanded in orientation to cater to city-wide customers and tourists as well as to the neighborhood. The current neighborhood commercial district zoning controls reflect and maintain these patterns of use.

Industry

In addition to the stores and workshops that occupied the interchangeable spaces that predominated on the ground floors of the main streets in North Beach, there were other businesses established before 1921 which by their nature or their size, did not fit in a standard commercial space. The largest of these were located at the north end of the district: the Bauer & Schweitzer Malting Company (Landmark No. 129) at 530-50 Chestnut Street (**Figure 56**) and the Lewis Packing Company Vinegar and Pickle Works at the corner of Columbus Avenue and Chestnut (demolished). Both were large industrial plants served by rail spurs of the Belt Railroad, linking them to the port, with specialized tanks, sheds, and other structures on large sites. North of Francisco Street, outside the survey area was an extensive industrial zone associated with the port, and drawing much of its labor from North Beach. (**Figure 57**)



FIGURE 56. Bauer & Schweitzer Hop And Malt Company, 530-50 Chestnut St.
Glenn D. Koch Collection.

The 1921 zoning law (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 20 September 1921) excluded these businesses and many others — auto repair shops, machine shops, blacksmiths, coal yards, lumber yards, storage businesses, factories (candy, pasta, sausages, and cigars), crematories, contractor's plants and storage yards (carpenters, plumbers, electricians), feed mills, marble cutting, bakeries with over five employees, and laundries with over ten employees. Any of these already in business could remain as long as they didn't make major changes. Over time, however, as they closed or moved away, other types of businesses moved in — generally speaking, industries and workshops were replaced by retail stores.

Since they occupied generic spaces in larger buildings, the departure of most of these businesses did not alter the building fabric or streetscapes of the neighborhood. However, the closing of the Lewis Packing Company, and the various working yards for coal, lumber, and contractors, left unusable structures and vacant lots that were gradually redeveloped, mostly with residential buildings.

The life of the district was also altered by this change. Gradually, street traffic in the neighborhood became

less rough and dangerous, because there was less loading and hauling of heavy materials. In the transition from shops to stores it became a place whose employees were less likely to be all men and more likely to include women. These changes made the streets more welcoming to women shoppers.



FIGURE 57. Looking towards North Beach industrial zone, 1930.

Gas holder at Powell and Jefferson Streets visible at far left.

J. B Monaco (jbmonaco.com, Telegraph Hill and North Beach Photo Gallery, image 36 of 91).

Photography

One other type of business — the photography studio — was a special case that might be categorized as a kind of workshop or industry; unlike the others, however, it was located on the top floor of buildings rather than either in the generic ground floor commercial space or on its own lot. In the early days of still photography, studios required unobstructed light for studio shots and outdoor space to dry prints. In dense urban settings, these were only available on the top floors and rooftops of buildings.

In 1913, there were at least six Italian -owned photography studios identified on the Sanborn maps in North Beach, all fitting this pattern: 678-696 Filbert Street; 201 Columbus Avenue (the former studio of J.B. Monaco); 261 Columbus Avenue, above what is now Vesuvio Cafe (see Figure A48); 1305 Stockton Street (the former Sandino studio; now Jason Photo Studio); 533 Broadway (the former Pisa Foto studio founded by Gino and Carlo Sbrana); and 271 Columbus Avenue in the building currently occupied by City Lights Books (formerly Vitalini Fotografia Italiana). **(Figure 58)** The J.B. Monaco, Vitalini Fotografia, and Pisa Foto studios were all located near the intersection of Columbus and Broadway. The buildings still exist today and, in the case of the Monaco and Pisa studios, the original skylights still exist.

Notably, the historic images captured over the span of 70 years by J.B. Monaco, known as the dean of North Beach photographers, left his imprint on Italian culture. Although he was well-known for his studio portraits, he was also one of the photographers that captured the 1906 disaster as it happened.



FIGURE 58. A photography studio, Vitalini Fotografia Italiana, is visible at the center of this image, 1920s. J. B. Monaco (jbmonaco.com Telegraph Hill and North Beach Photo Gallery, image 29 of 91).

Private Transportation

Before 1906, Sanborn maps showed numerous stables in North Beach. At the time of the earthquake, automobiles were new and generally owned by people in wealthier neighborhoods than North Beach, so there were few, if any garages before that time. In the rapid reconstruction of North Beach beginning in July 1906, many stables and very few garages were built. Stables were implicated in the plague epidemic in 1907 and were pointed out for criticism by housing reformers. In particular, wood structures that included stables on the ground floor and living quarters above were criticized as unsanitary and dangerous. (Todd 1909:73) As a consequence, many stables were removed from North Beach within a few years after they were built.



FIGURE 59. Beer wagon on Montgomery Ave. at Pacific St. J. B. Monaco (jbmonaco.com, Telegraph Hill and North Beach Photo Gallery, 17 of 91).

Nevertheless, horses and horse-drawn transportation remained significant until the 1920s. **(Figure 59)** To serve these needs, as shown on the 1913 Sanborn maps, there were stables, a wagon shop, wagon house, feed mills, blacksmiths, and a veterinary hospital in North Beach. Most of these buildings were demolished and all that survive were in new uses before 1949, the year of the next available Sanborn maps of the area.

As shown on the 1913 Sanborn map, many small stables were scattered throughout the district, mostly on alleys and midblock sites. Some appear to have been connected to businesses, for example, a beer bottling plant on Chestnut Street, a cooperage at 520 Filbert Street, and a fuel and feed operation at 527 Green Street. In addition, several small stables shared buildings with residences, including the two-story dwellings with stables on the ground floor at 1950 Powell Street, and at 505-07 Francisco Street, dwellings with stables in the basement at 1536 Stockton, and at 2141 1/2 Mason Street in the middle of the block near the end of Newell Street, and a two-story dwelling at 683 Green Street with a stable and wagon house in the basement and hay on the second floor behind the dwelling. All of these buildings still exist except for 527 Green Street and 683 Green Street.

The largest stable in North Beach at that time was a two-story brick structure with a clinker brick facade at 721 Filbert Street, called the Hildebrand Stables, still standing. **(Figure 60)**



FIGURE 60. 721 Filbert St. (constructed in 1906). Former Hildebrand Stables, converted to a garage in 1924. Originally built for political boss, Abe Ruef.
Photo by Karen Zisson.

While parking and repair garages had been built elsewhere in the city by that time and single family homes of the wealthy were provided with garages, in 1913 there were only three auto-related buildings in all of North Beach shown on the Sanborn maps. One of these, at the northeast corner of Broadway and Bartol Street, was labeled “auto storage.” The other two were small, one-story wood structures, big enough to park only one or two cars; these were located near the back of the Hearst Kindergarten at 560 Stockton Street and at the end of Houston Street.

The complete replacement of horses by automobiles is shown on the 1949 Sanborn maps where there were no stables or horse-related businesses; instead, there were several gasoline service stations, especially on Columbus Avenue.

One other means of private transportation — the bicycle — was present in North Beach. In 1913, there was a bicycle repair shop at 422 Columbus Avenue.

Labor

Poverty and rough conditions for workers, many of whom lived in North Beach, served as a catalyst for labor organization, demonstrations, and resistance. The *San Francisco Chronicle* reported in 1911 that “street speakers Sunday mornings at Green Street and Grant Avenue” provoked complaints from “residents of the neighborhood who are obliged to pass that corner on their way to the services at Saints Peter and Paul’s Church.” The police arrested some of the speakers and “the accused men were fined in the Police Court for disturbing the peace.” The speakers spoke in Italian and were members of the Industrial Workers of the World. (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 14 August 1911)

The following Friday speakers gathered again at the same intersection standing on “a soap-box rostrum on the pavement,” attracting a crowd: “Phillip Perrone, who was speaking, spoke disparagingly about the American flag, condemned law and order, denounced all form of government and ended with a tirade against the Pope.” When the police arrested Perrone, fights broke out in the crowd, followed by more arrests. Police efforts to take the men to a fire station on Broadway as a way station before going to jail (**Figure 61**), resulted in a “street battle” and a call for police reserves. (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 14 August 1911)

When this matter was presented to the Police Court, the defendants claimed that they “were simply reading a book written by Ernesto Haeckel, the philosopher.” (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 16 August 1911) Ernesto Haeckel was a prominent German scientist and philosopher who promoted the work of Charles Darwin and rejected the church in 1910.



FIGURE 61. Broadway Jail, 2 April 1906.
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library (AAB-2952).

The exact nature and purpose of these demonstrations is unclear. Comments of one of those arrested indicate that at some level, the issue was simply free speech: “Some of the men arrested were in the campaign for free speech at Fresno . . . We have our political opinions, and think we have a right to express them. Others think we have not that right and the police arrest us.” (*San Francisco Chronicle* , 14 August 1911)

Because it was a working class district for most of its history, many residents of North Beach were longshoremen, factory workers, laborers, and others who were involved in the labor movement. The home of one of these, a one-room cottage at 115 Telegraph Boulevard at the top of the Filbert Street steps, was occupied by labor leader Bill Bailey from 1958 to 1985. (The house was moved to Islais Creek and is in severely deteriorated condition.) (Sherwood and Powell 2008: 4-5; Nolte 2010).

Additional research is needed to further develop specific ties to labor history in North Beach.

ENTERTAINMENT AND VICE

In North Beach, the line between entertainment and vice has shifted over time, and it has not always been clear where the line was drawn. Places primarily for entertainment and places for vice have often served both sides of the line. The proximity of North Beach to the infamous “Barbary Coast” — Pacific Avenue east of Columbus Avenue — long contributed to the presence of vice in North Beach. At the same time, there have always been places of entertainment similar to what would have been found in any San Francisco neighborhood.

Many sites associated with the themes of entertainment and vice are in places used for commercial businesses including restaurants and saloons where gang activity, gambling, and confidence games may have taken place. Others were built for specific purposes such as theaters, ball courts, amusement and dance halls.

Theaters

The first theater within what later became the North Beach neighborhood, built on Dupont near Green, was the Hook Tonk Tong Opera Theater, a pre-fabricated structure from China that opened on 23 December 1851; it was still in use in 1867. In 1857 it was described as “a curious pagoda-looking edifice painted outside and in an extraordinary manner.” (Choy 2008: 6)

Even before the North Beach neighborhood had developed, an Italian theater where opera was performed was built nearby at Jackson and Kearny streets. With the introduction of motion pictures around the turn of the century, a proliferation of types of theaters emerged in the early twentieth century.

In the period after the earthquake and fire of 1906, there were theater spaces of two types in North Beach. All theaters were required to follow special provisions of the building law, but some occupied simple rectangular spaces like other kinds of shops and stores. For example, in 1906, there were three nickelodeons in the neighborhood. (Dillon 1985: 118) As shown on the 1913 Sanborn map, a one-story building at 620-628 Broadway had two bays: one housed “moving pictures” and the other housed a penny arcade.

The second type of theater space was in a building conceived in its entirety as a theater, sometimes for stage performances only and sometimes for both stage performances and film. The first of these were built in 1909-1910 when four theaters opened in North Beach: the California Theater for film and burlesque at 649 Broadway (subsequently the Liberty and the World, demolished 1953); the Royal Palace Theater for film at 644 Broadway (subsequently the Verdi and the World, demolished 1983); the Washington Square Theater for film at 1741 Powell Street (subsequently the Milano (**Figure 62**), the Palace, and the Pagoda Palace, closed 1974, demolished 2013); and the Acme Theater for film at 1249 Stockton Street (subsequently the



FIGURE 62. The Milano Theater, across from Washington Square, ca. 1930's.
J. B. Monaco (jbmonaco.com, Telegraph Hill and North Beach
Photo Gallery, image 54 of 91).

Times, closed 1976). Each of these underwent not only name changes but exterior remodelings.

Another theater, the Bijou, was shown on the 1913 Sanborn map running through from 532 Columbus Avenue to Stockton Street between Green and Union streets. There was a stage with “some scenery” at the rear, indicated on the Sanborn map.

The last major theater in North Beach was opened in 1924 in a converted Congregational Church as the Teatro Allesandro Eden at 631 Green Street, across from Fugazi Hall, for both film and live performances. In 1927, the name was changed to the Green Street Theater. It was demolished in 1955.

The last theater in North Beach was the World Theater at 644 Broadway, located from 1985-2000 in a new

structure on the site of the previous World Theater.

Social and fraternal halls in North Beach have sometimes served as theaters. These are discussed elsewhere in this report. A surviving example is Fugazi Hall at 678 Green Street, which originally played host to Italian music concerts and opera performances.

Amusement and Dance Halls

Numerous ordinary commercial spaces were occupied for various types of amusements, including penny arcades, pool halls, and dance halls. These were generally on the ground floors of larger buildings, although one pool hall was in a basement. Some pool halls were at the rear of saloons. Many of these types of businesses in 1913, as shown on the Sanborn map, were on or near Columbus or Broadway, close to the denser concentration of such places in the Barbary Coast.

Of particular interest to the Italian community were bocce ball courts. The 1913 and 1949 Sanborn maps show a “ball alley” on the south side of Cadell Alley behind 524 Union Street and “Boccie Ball” behind 449 Broadway. These were in a one-story wood buildings in long rectangular plans. There is still an outdoor bocce ball court in Joe DiMaggio Playground, which has been in the playground since at least 1935.

Restaurants and Saloons

Restaurants and saloons occupied the same generic spaces as shops and stores. **(Figures 63 and 64)** Apart from regulations concerning “Ranges and Stoves” the building law of 1906 did not contain any special rules for restaurants. The operation of restaurants was separately regulated under the public health laws and other municipal ordinances.



FIGURE 63. New Buon Gusto Restaurant on Broadway.
J. B. Monaco (jbmonaco.com, Telegraph Hill and North Beach
Photo Gallery, image 18 of 91).

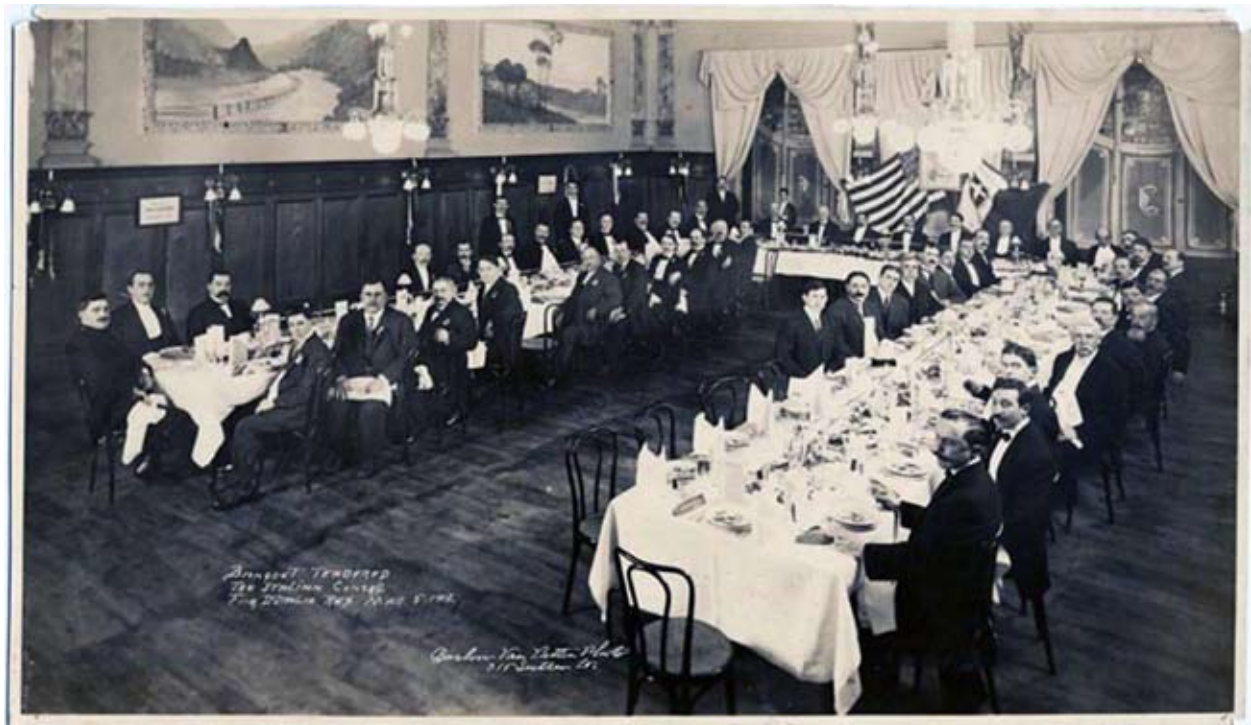


FIGURE 64. Fior d'Italia, 1912.
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library (AAF-0910).

Restaurants and saloons were located on the main streets — Broadway, Columbus Avenue, Grant Avenue, Stockton Street, and Green Street — with a concentration around Broadway and Columbus.

During Prohibition (16 January 1920 to 23 March 1933) the saloons were closed, but speakeasies flourished all over town, with the most popular ones being in the North Beach and Uptown Tenderloin districts. (Flamm 1977: 18) Unlike legal saloons before and after Prohibition, which were located at busy street corners and other conspicuous locations, speakeasies tended to be somewhat out of the way. In North Beach, Joe's Wine Cellar was at the rear of 310 Green Street (demolished in 1999), and "a businessmen's club" was at the end of Kohler Place off Green Street near the top of Telegraph Hill. In March 1927, the police raided "The Silver Slipper at 1516 Stockton Street . . . The Studio around the corner at 683 Green Street and several others." (Myrick 2001: 159-160, 131) The Silver Slipper was in the basement of what is now The North Beach Restaurant at 1512 Stockton Street, and 683 Green Street is now a parking lot. What later became Mooney's Irish Pub at 1525 Grant Avenue (extant) had a 600-square-foot speakeasy in its basement next to a Bocce Ball Court. (Boyd 2008: 18) According to Jerry Flamm, a speakeasy in the "triangular Hotel d'Oloron, looking out on two short blind alleys just off Columbus Avenue below Broadway was particularly famous among patrons from the press. Each time federal agents raided the hotel and its bootleg bar they would routinely ask the courts to shut down the premises at the hotel address. The owner would then call in a carpenter, have a new front doorway cut out to one of the alleys, and register a new operating address. The hotel and its clandestine bar eventually wound up with a string of front doors and became one of the classic tales of the North Beach regulars. (Flamm 1977:21) The Hotel d'Oloron, was located in the extant building at 53-55 Columbus Avenue, later known as the Fong Building.

At least one incident of making whiskey drew the attention of residents and enforcement officials: "Mash used to make moonshine liquor in the North Beach district . . . is attracting all the rats in the city and making the rodents so ferocious that they are frightening the peaceful residents of the Latin Quarter." (*San Francisco Chronicle* 17 November 1922)

Because the Prohibition law permitted an individual to make 200 gallons of wine a year for personal consumption, and because many Italian families made their own wine anyway, home life may have been less affected by Prohibition in North Beach than many other areas. It is not clear, however, what effect Prohibition had on public life in North Beach.

The loophole that permitted wine making and home consumption was the result of a series of developments. The common term Prohibition generally refers to the Eighteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution but also to the Volstead Act and other laws and government actions. The Eighteenth Amendment prohibited "the manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors" and allowed "appropriate legislation" to enforce it (U.S. Constitution), hence, the Volstead Act. The Volstead Act defined "intoxicating liquors" as having more than 0.5% alcohol, but did not prohibit the use of intoxicating liquors. "Section 29 of the Act allowed 200 gallons . . . of 'non-intoxicating cider and fruit juice' to be made each year at home." (Wikipedia 2009) But a ruling of the Bureau of Internal Revenue threw out the 0.5% threshold for intoxicating liquors because people became intoxicated with different levels of alcohol. According to the *New York Times*, this ruling "practically 'lifts the ban on home brews for home consumption' which may contain more than ½ percent of alcohol." (*New York Times*, 25 July 1920) Despite the use of the word "brews," the ruling applied only to cider and fruit juices (including the juice of the grape — wine), which were capable of being made into vinegar; it did not apply to beer, which could not be made into vinegar. In big cities with large populations of Roman Catholics who had opposed Prohibition, this loophole allowed the police to back off from cracking down on home winemaking and consumption. Among the principle beneficiaries of this development were San Francisco's Italians who had a tradition of home winemaking and a plentiful local supply of grapes.

Prostitution

Prostitution was legal in California until several years after the reconstruction of North Beach following the earthquake and fire of 1906. During the period before it was banned, police and social reformers considered prostitution to be a serious problem in some parts of the city, especially in the Barbary Coast adjacent to North Beach: “Middle-class women reformers . . . addressed their concerns about the health and social welfare of women by supporting protective legislation for women and children.” (Jensen and Lothrop 1987: 60) When a whorehouse, “The Nymphia,” was about to open at Stockton and Pacific streets in 1899, there was a big public protest. At that time, there were no whorehouses recognized north of Pacific Avenue. (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 12 July 1899 and 12 August 1899)

The problem appears to have increased in North Beach itself (as distinct from the Barbary Coast) after the earthquake. In October 1906, the police “raided a resort conducted by Japanese,” arresting fifteen women and one man in a building described as located in “the gore block formed by Montgomery [Columbus] Avenue, Dupont [Grant], and Adler [Jack Kerouac] streets. From this, it could have been either north or south of Adler Place. “The one story building which was so reft of its tenants covers nearly a quarter of a block and provision is made for housing over a hundred women. Elaborate arrangements are made in the way of traps in the roof and back walls for escape in case of emergency.” (*San Francisco Examiner*, 14 October 1906)

In 1908, the North Beach Improvement Club called attention to “questionable resorts” in the vicinity of Montgomery and Kearny streets: “it was almost impossible for residents of North Beach to reach their homes from the business district without passing a number of disorderly places.” (*San Francisco Call*, 12 April 1908)

In 1911, the concerns of residents about prostitution in North Beach became a major public issue in hearings before the Board of Police Commissioners. In May 1911, complaints were made about “conditions along Kearny Street and on Pacific Street near Kearny . . . intoxicated women . . . appeared on the streets in the morning near the haunts of the night revelers at times when ‘decent people’ are going to work”; “the dance halls and houses of ill repute close to Kearny Street”; “the women from the dance halls and the houses of ill fame taking up their residence among the respectable people of North Beach”; and “the lodging houses near the children’s playgrounds in North Beach . . . filled with lewd women who contaminated the children who frequented the playgrounds.” (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 27 May 1911)

In September 1911, there were protests against “the erection and opening by Jerome Bassity of a new ‘crib’ on Ohio street [14-18 Osgood Place] within sixty feet of” Washington Irving School at Broadway and Montgomery. “Miss Christine Barille informed the meeting that Bassity’s place is ready for opening. The new resort is . . . one of the largest in the district.” (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 7 September 1911)

Some merchants attempted to abolish a police “dead line” at Broadway, north of which “the habitués of the district south of Broadway, embracing the Coast, were barred from shopping,” because it took away an important source of business. “It was pointed out that the Coast is a natural trade tributary, and it was asked that the women be allowed to make purchases and invade the protesting district as long as they conducted themselves properly.” (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 15 September 1911)

According to Bloomfield, there was a concentration of brothels on Hinckley Street and Pinkney Place (now Fresno and Romolo, respectively) in the 1880s and 1890s. She believed that prostitution still existed in this area in 1912 in the New Trentino Hotel at the northeast corner with Pinkney (now 549-51 Vallejo/54 Romolo) and in the Galli Hotel at 31 Hinckley (now 75 Fresno). (Bloomfield, et al. 1982: 85) Both examples are highlighted on the 1913 Sanborn Map below. (**Figure 65**)

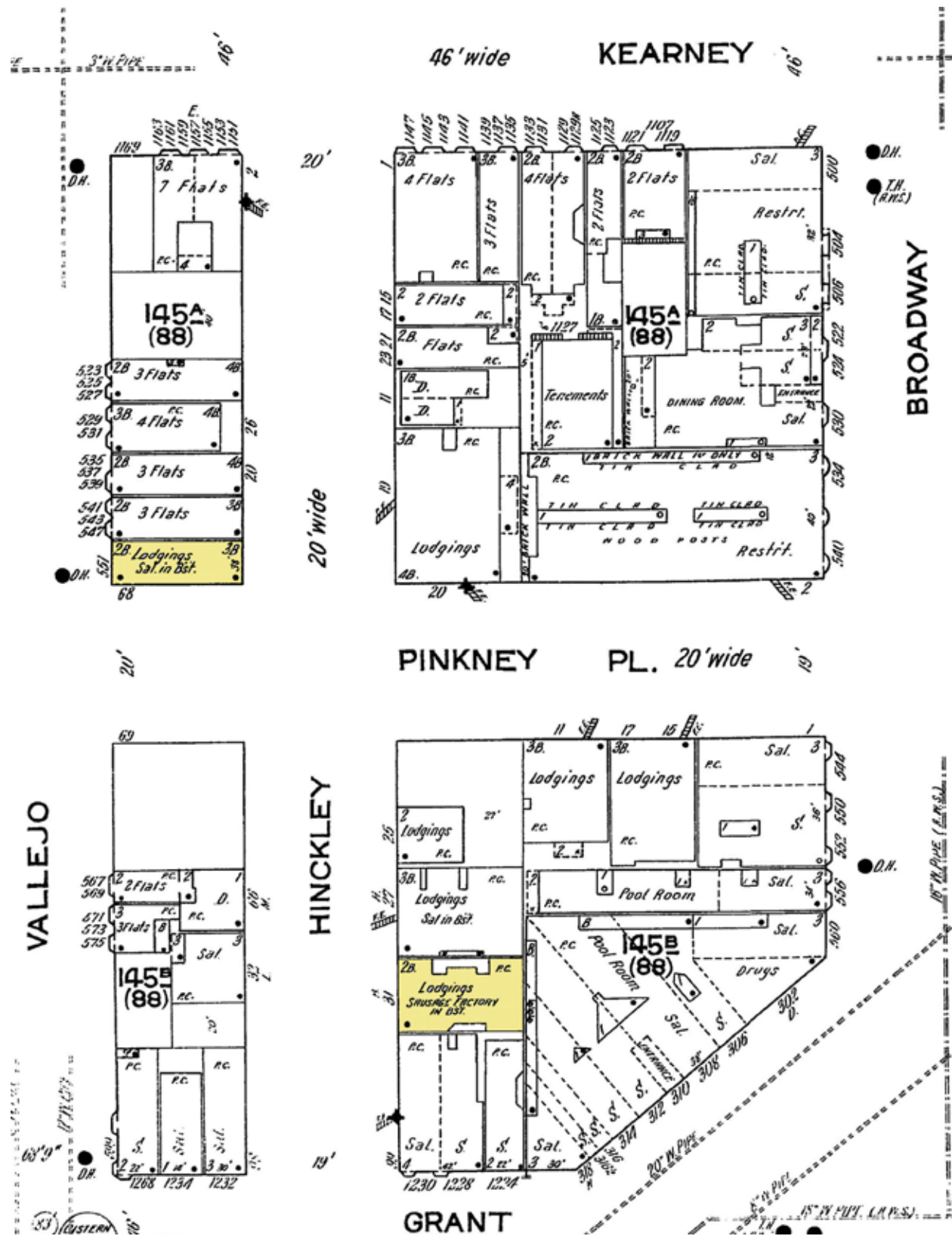


FIGURE 65. Prostitution occurred in "lodgings" on Hinckley and Pinkney Place. Sanborn Map Company, 1913, vol. 1, p. 32. Library of Congress website via San Francisco Public Library.

The Red Light Abatement Act was passed into law by the State of California in 1913, but enforcement of the act was stalled in the courts until 14 February 1917. During this period, beginning 30 September 1913, the City of San Francisco passed a law attempting indirectly to control prostitution in the Barbary Coast, but defining the area broadly to include everything north of Clay Street and east of Stockton Street to the bay — about half of the North Beach neighborhood. This law prohibited “dancing or the presence of female employees or customers in any cafe, restaurant, or saloon in the district where liquor was sold,” (Gentry 1964: 235) with the idea that the absence of liquor where women were present would remove an important catalyst for the business of prostitution. Social reformers also considered dancing to be “sinful and exploitive.” (Jensen and Lothrop 1987: 60)

While the location of prostitution changed within the Barbary Coast, to some extent, it simply moved: “dance halls now flourished there and several hundred women made a living in them. Social reformers linked dance halls with brothels and saloons . . .” (Jensen and Lothrop 1987: 61)

In fact, while prostitution was diminished within the defined district, it moved to restaurants and saloons in other parts of the city, including those parts of North Beach west of Stockton Street. Then, in 1917 when the courts ruled that the Red Light Abatement Act was legal, open prostitution ended in San Francisco.

The end of open prostitution did not mean the end of prostitution in North Beach. Curt Gentry, author of *The Madames of San Francisco*, wrote that the Barbary Coast died in stages.” (Gentry 1964: 234) This applied to prostitution in North Beach as well. Prostitution died or was suppressed many times, always to bounce back. After prostitution revived in the Barbary Coast, the police “shut it down hard” in 1921. (Smith 2005: 82)

A graft investigation for the city by Edwin Atherton beginning in 1931 looked into activities where corrupt police were paid bribes and protection money; these activities included prostitution along with “vice, gambling, and ‘the rackets’.” (Gentry 1964: 248) Among 135 places of prostitution in San Francisco, a principal concentration of them was “the Kearny–North Beach area.” “In one section of the North Beach area, houses of prostitution were so plentiful that owners of other buildings put signs on their front doors identifying them as private residences.” (Gentry 1964: 252)

Atherton also identified one particular sector of the population involved in prostitution, the French: “This nationality appeared to have a class of people who were born to this business and carried it on as a family ‘profession’.” (Gentry 1964: 252)

Prostitution remained a significant activity in the area at least to the end of World War II. (Gentry 1964: 252)

Men met prostitutes in North Beach in restaurants, saloons, and dance halls and went with them to rooms in hotels and lodging houses. Or, they went directly to houses of prostitution located in dwellings, boarding houses, and cheap lodging houses called “cribs,” like that at 14-18 Osgood Place, now demolished.

Organized Crime and Gangs

Organized criminal activity in North Beach appears to have taken place at different levels, by groups that ranged from small ad hoc or informal gangs to larger organizations. According to *The Mafia Encyclopedia*, one common type of criminal activity in the early twentieth century involved the black hand note, “a loosely run extortion racket practiced in the Little Italy sections of many American cities” including San Francisco. “It was not unusual for a businessman in financial trouble to send a black hand note to another businessman in hopes of solving his own money woes. When the recipient got such a note threatening him or members

of his family, he automatically thought the Black Handers were most likely mafioso or Camorra gangsters.” (Sifakis 2005: 62) Those who didn’t comply were killed.

On 30 November 1916, a threat from a black hand note came to a spectacular end in North Beach. Gaetano Tugrassio, a mantle builder, of 1622 Powell Street, had previously been given permission by the police to carry a gun after receiving a black hand note from Antonio Pedona of 6½ Scotland Street, his brother Joseph of 737 Greenwich Street, and their nephew, Antonio Pedona, Jr. “The shooting occurred in front of an ice cream parlor at 735 Columbus Avenue [extant]. The three Pedonas, according to the police, opened fire simultaneously, the brothers with revolvers and the nephew with a rifle. Tugrassio . . . returned the fire.” This “thrilling revolver battle staged at Columbus and Filbert street” resulting in the death of Tugrassio and the wounding of both Pedona brothers attracted “a throng of several thousand persons.” (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 1 December 1916)

In an article on “Organized Criminals” the *San Francisco Chronicle* identified an “alleged” North Beach gang called “Forty Strong.”

It is well known that there is among the Sicilians a very turbulent element which is accustomed to act together in rather loose organizations for all sorts of criminal enterprises, and it is evident that some of that element has immigrated to this country, of which some have found their way to this city and the North Beach.

Unquestionably they are all well known to the police and yet they continue their outbreaks in which murder is a common occurrence. Their feuds, like those of the Chinese, are mostly with each other, and they kill upon the least provocation.

They all have revolvers and never hesitate to use them. And they have knives as ready as revolvers . . .

Those feuds are more likely to break out in dance halls than elsewhere, and it is evident that there are other things than sexual vice to be considered in relation to licensing these places . . .

These people kill, preferably, their enemies, but spectators, if they get in the way, as happened the other night on Chestnut Street. (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 6 February 1917)

Four years later, after the beginning of Prohibition, the Forty Strong gang was in the news again for beating up a policeman at “a soft drink resort” (formerly a saloon) at Mason and Chestnut streets.

While adult men were the primary participants in organized criminal activity, there was at least one instance of children and adults, mostly “private families and small merchants,” organizing to steal from railroad cars. The *Chronicle* reported in October 1919 on the arrest of nine boys between 11 and 14 years old and the proposed issuance of warrants for the arrest of at least five North Beach women “customers” who placed orders with the boys for specific items such as champagne. The boys were “engaged in stealing from freight cars along North Beach and have carried off merchandise, wines and foodstuffs aggregating from \$5,000 to \$8,000 in value . . . The boys disposed of [the stolen goods] to the housewives in the North Beach district for small amounts of money.” (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 24 October 1919)

During prohibition East Coast mafia “soldiers” who controlled illegal booze coming into the City got a foothold in North Beach. According to Dick Boyd:

In 1928, Gerri Ferri, the “Don Juan of North Beach, was the man in charge. He was later found filled with bullets in his bathroom at 490 Lombard [extant]. Ferri’s murder set off a four-year power struggle. He was soon followed in power and death by “Genaro the Magnificent” Broccolo, Mario Filippa, Alfred Scariso and Frank Bosch, “the strong man of the Sicilians,” all of whom had brief reigns. The bloodbath ended with the murder of the self-proclaimed “King of North Beach Crooks,” Luigi Malvese of 1495 Grant Ave. [extant]. At one time or another Malvese had been charged for bootlegging, hijacking, extortion and gunrunning (including a plot to smuggle guns into Folsom Prison).

He met his demise just before 6 p.m. on May 19, 1932 in Al Capone style while double-parked in front of the Del Monte Barber Shop at 720 Columbus Ave. [extant] . . . then a gangster hangout. (Boyd 2008: 18)

With the repeal of the Volstead Act in 1933, booze flowed again legally. As the bootlegging business dried up, most of the mafia left San Francisco. (Boyd 2008: 18)

Gambling and Confidence Games

The newspapers have reported on a variety of types of characteristic crimes of North Beach and on the types of places where they occurred.

In 1913, after several Italian “bunko men” were arrested and sent to jail, one wrote a letter to the judge exposing police graft. Bunko is “[a] swindle in which you cheat at gambling or persuade a person to buy worthless property” (Princeton 2001). One of those implicated in the complicated scandal was “a cafe man in whose resort on Columbus Street the members of the bunko ring congregated.” Another cafe was at 544 Broadway “where, nightly, detectives met bunko men . . . Frequently the police took dinner with the confidence operators . . . while they were supposed to be seeking them following the complaints of victims robbed of their life’s savings . . . several of whom died of grief when they found it impossible to get back the money.” (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 22 April 1913) The building at 544 Broadway is extant.

According to the police, the initial crimes were committed in North Beach by North Beach residents: “We visited the Italian quarter and arrested about five of the bunko suspects.” (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 22 April 1913)

While bunko largely ended in the 1920s, gambling has been a more persistent activity. Because it was illegal, gambling survived at least in part when it was protected by the police. In August 1920, a crackdown resulted in “whispers accusing the police of displaying favoritism in controlling gambling houses in the North Beach district.” The police raided “an alleged gambling club, said to be conducted by Charles ‘Dutch’ White, a former saloon man, at 1224 Grant Avenue.” Among the thirty-one people arrested, some complained that the raid was to punish White for supporting the wrong candidate for District Attorney. Proof of this was that other nearby gambling places were left alone, including the Workingmen’s Club at 1022 Kearny Street, operated by Frank Dougherty, Toby Irwin’s place on Stockton Street, and “a score of other places.” (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 24 August 1920) The buildings at 1224 Grant Avenue and 1022 Kearny are extant.

IV. INFRASTRUCTURE

PUBLIC SYSTEMS AND STREET FURNITURE

When the first buildings were built on city lots in North Beach the only public infrastructure in existence was the city-sponsored survey of the land into a grid of streets, blocks, and lots. Streets were not paved, there was no water supply, sewer system, or any other publicly available service or amenity. Private wells supplied water, all residences depended on outhouses, home lighting was from candles and whale oil, heating and cooking were in stoves that burned wood or coal. Candles, whale oil, coal, and wood had to be purchased and supplies were not always available. Houses that caught on fire burned down.

Gradually, systems were built to improve conditions. Survey monuments were put in place to facilitate the survey of land. Water and gas, at least initially, were provided by private companies but always required city approval for pipelines in public streets. The immense gas holder at Powell and Jefferson streets from 1891 to 1957 was part of the large gas works that provided manufactured gas via cast-iron pipes to North Beach (beginning 1 May 1905), long visible in the neighborhood (see Figure 57). The city built sidewalks and graded and paved streets with gravel, basalt blocks, and brick when horses powered transportation, and with concrete and asphalt when automobiles replaced horses. **(Figure 66)** The city also built staircases in streets that were too steep for horses or motor vehicles, first utilitarian wood structures and later ornamental concrete structures. Extensions of basements of commercial buildings under sidewalks were called sidewalk vaults, often lit by natural light through grids of round or square lenses called sidewalk lights. Privately owned ornamental street clocks were placed on public sidewalks. For much of the twentieth century, there were at least two clocks on Columbus Avenue, one in front of Cavalli Books (now City Lights) and one outside R. Matteucci and Company, jewelry store, damaged and removed in 1999.

The city built sewer lines, first with wood pipes that dumped raw sewage into the bay. Beginning in the 1870s, new brick sewers were designed by civil engineers according to new standards of public sanitation brought about by the public health movement.



FIGURE 66. Fabric of infrastructure, Columbus Ave. and Powell St., 1919.
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library,
Department of Public Works, Album 25, #5961.

After the 1906 earthquake, old systems were rebuilt and new systems were put in place or extended. Permanent survey monuments were established. Wood utility poles carrying electric power lines and telephone lines, in limited use before 1906, were extended to every block. A new high-pressure water system for fighting fires, the Auxiliary Water Supply System, was put in place by 1913. A new municipal water system from Hetch Hetchy began in 1913, arrived in 1934. New hydroelectric power plants and advances in transmission technology brought noticeable increases in electric power in 1907 and 1921 making electric streetlights possible.

V. ARCHITECTURE: BUILDINGS AND PLACES

The buildings of North Beach were overwhelmingly built between 1906 and 1915. They were built at consistent sizes and scales using consistent methods and materials under the same building laws. A narrow range of building types was produced. The facades were treated in the same styles. Almost every building was built to the front and sides of its lot, leaving varying amounts of open space at the rear. On hillsides they climb in even steps, the basement or ground floor accommodating the adjustment from level. The buildings were all built with modest budgets.

The result of all these similarities was a harmonious landscape in two general parts. The residential area, which was by far the largest part, is characterized by two- and three-story wood houses and flats with historically inspired ornamentation and stylistic references at the street facades. On the main streets, most of these buildings had bay windows; on the alleys the buildings had flat fronts.

On the streets that provided the principal linkages of North Beach with other parts of town — Columbus Avenue, Broadway, Stockton, and Grant, and on the cross streets near them, there were hotels and lodging houses; most buildings on these streets had commercial businesses on the ground floor. The buildings on Broadway and Columbus were larger than elsewhere in North Beach — many were four stories and built on larger lots; those on the south side of Broadway and on Columbus south of Broadway were within the Fire Limits defined in the building law and were, therefore, of brick or concrete construction.

For all building types, their structural systems and materials fell into a narrow range.

STRUCTURE

The structural, mechanical, and electrical features of most North Beach buildings are similar. They are of wood construction, probably a platform frame (a variation of a balloon frame) consisting of two-by-four-inch studs on sixteen-inch centers. They were initially provided with electrical outlets and lighting fixtures. Most residences were heated only by the coal-fired cooking stove in the kitchen; some also may have had coal-burning fireplaces in the front room — these units were sometimes called “coal flats.” Many were shown on Sanborn maps with a “patent chimney”, a commercially sold chimney of unknown design and materials. They had flush toilets and cold running water.

Most exceptions to the standard form of wood construction were brick or reinforced concrete buildings on the south side of Broadway and along Columbus Avenue where they were required by the fire or building laws.

STYLE, ORNAMENT, APPEARANCE

In style and ornamentation, most North Beach buildings are loosely based on the architecture of Renaissance and Baroque Europe. Perhaps most of all, they faintly echo the palaces of Renaissance Italy in the regular placement of windows, in the use of proportions and details of the classical orders (of base, shaft, capital, entablature and cornice), and in the use of classical moldings. **(Figure 67)** These are superimposed on the facades of American buildings whose bay windows, fenestration, and proportions were generated by balloon or platform frame construction (rather than masonry), and whose basements were often converted to garages.



FIGURE 67. 516 Green St. (constructed in 1907). Architect: Adolph Cavallo.
Typical use of Renaissance and Baroque ornamentation. Photo by Dennis Hearne.

These buildings tend, like Renaissance palaces, to be either in a one-part composition or a two-part composition with its first floor constituting the lower part and the upper floors constituting the upper part. This is almost always the case in bay windowed buildings because of the ten-foot height requirement for bay windows, which creates a different appearance of the lower and upper parts of the building. **(Figure 68)** In addition to these, a few buildings were given other stylistic treatments — Gothic, Arts and Crafts, Mission Revival, Art Nouveau, Elizabethan, Tudor.

Although superficially diverse, because they were typically applied in the same compositions in the same materials and at the same scales, they harmonize with the predominant Renaissance and Baroque styles of the neighborhood.



FIGURE 68. 2035-41 Powell St. (constructed in 1909)
Contractor: DeMartini Building Company.
Typical two-part composition of bay-windowed building.
Photo by Judith Powell.

There are two principle stylistic exceptions to the large majority of buildings in the neighborhood. First were the remodeled facades during the late 1930s at the time of the Golden Gate International Exposition of 1939. Many existing buildings in North Beach were remodeled with new stucco walls and Moderne ornamentation. Most of these were mixed-use buildings on major streets. Although the first neon signs in the neighborhood were probably installed in the 1920s, more and larger signs were installed during this period. Bay windows remained, but all other ornamentation was replaced by Streamline Moderne or Art Deco motifs, such as speedlines for cornices, bas reliefs (e.g. Mayan figures and zigzags), stepped horizontals, and vertical divisions. Such ornament is usually at cornices and around entrances. Many of these buildings are concentrated around Washington Square, reflecting the 1939 exhortation by Saints Peter and Paul Church to fix-up and modernize the neighborhood to impress visitors to the Exposition on Treasure Island. **(Figures 69, 70, and 71)**

The second stylistic exception from the mid-1930s through 1970s was based on European Modernism. These buildings are treated in more detail in a separate section, below, as Modern Architecture. **(Figure 72)**



FIGURE 69. Facades remodeled in the late 1930's with stucco walls and Moderne ornamentation.
(Above Right) 501-47 Columbus Ave. (constructed in 1906) Architect: Conrad A. Meussdorffer.
(Above Left) 500-24 Columbus Ave. (constructed in 1907). Architect: Martens & Coffey. Photo: Judith Powell.



FIGURE 70. Detail of Moderne ornamentation of 501-47 Columbus Ave. Photos by Will Shank.



FIGURE 71. 601-15 Union St./1539-49 Stockton St. (constructed in 1906).
Facade remodeled in the late 1930's with stucco walls and Moderne ornamentation.
Architect: Paul J. DeMartini. Photo by Will Shank.



FIGURE 72. 439 Greenwich St.
(constructed in 1961).
Mid-century Modern apartment building.
Architect: Sazevich & Walsh.
Photo: Google Street View

RESIDENTIAL AND MIXED USE BUILDINGS

Dwellings: Cottages and Other Types

Although probably the second most common building type in the district, dwellings built for one family or in some cases as boarding houses, are relatively inconspicuous. **(Figures 73 and 74)** At one or two stories they are smaller than the predominant building type -- the flat. But most importantly, the majority of them were built on alleys or at the rear of lots with flats in front blocking the view from the street. The large number of dwellings in North Beach is evident on Sanborn maps **(Figure 75)** and in aerial photographs. Those dwellings that face the streets and alleys are like dwellings in other parts of San Francisco in the period of reconstruction after the earthquake and fire -- one-story and two-story wood buildings with modest ornamentation. While they would appear to be like others in the number and arrangement of rooms, not enough is known about them to say what the interiors are like except that typically they had four or five rooms and were plastered inside, at a cost of \$850 to \$2,000. (*San Francisco Call*, 22 January 1908, p. 4) An example is presented below in the plans for a two floor dwelling at 776 Union Street. **(Figure 76)**



FIGURE 73. 420 Chestnut St. (constructed ca. 1911), dwelling.
Photo by John G. Corbett.



FIGURE 74. 2 Nobles Alley (constructed ca. 1906), dwelling.
Photo by Dennis Hearne.

Because the dwellings in the centers of the blocks — where there were flats and other building types as well — are generally not visible to the public, almost nothing is known about them. The difficulty is increased by the absence of building permits or contract notices on most of them so that the date of construction, type of construction, builder, etc, is unknown (according to a rough estimate from survey data, there are around 200 dwellings in the back portion of lots in North Beach). It may be that some of these dwellings were originally Camp Cottages built by the Relief Corporation for refugees in Washington Square or elsewhere, and moved to their current locations when the camps were closed in August 1907. While a permit was required to move a wood building or cottage, the building law did not specify that such buildings were required to comply with regulations for new wood buildings.

It is also possible that some of the dwellings in the centers of blocks were temporary structures built between the earthquake in April 1906 and the official starting date for new construction in July of 1906. All such buildings were required to be demolished, but enforcement was lax. (See discussion of “Temporary Buildings” on pages 28-31.)

A brief item in the *Architect and Engineer* in 1917 concerns “shacks” that may include some of these mid-block buildings in North Beach:

Following the death of three firemen in a destructive fire in some old wooden buildings, the San Francisco authorities are making another attempt to get rid of the cheap frame structures within the fire limits which have been a menace to life and property for a number of years. The Board of Public Works has already taken steps to remove some structures which come under ordinances already passed, and a new ordinance has been framed to cover still other cheap wooden buildings. Most of the wooden buildings aimed at were erected as emergency structures immediately after the great fire of 1906 with the understanding that they should be torn down after two years. If the authorities insist on tearing down these dangerous fire traps, there should be quite a little permanent building done during the next twelve months. (*Architect and Engineer* 1917)

In other words, mid-block dwellings may be surviving temporary structures from April to July 1906, or they may be buildings that replaced those temporary structures after the temporaries were removed by the Board of Public Works in one of its clean-up campaigns, such as the campaign of 1917.

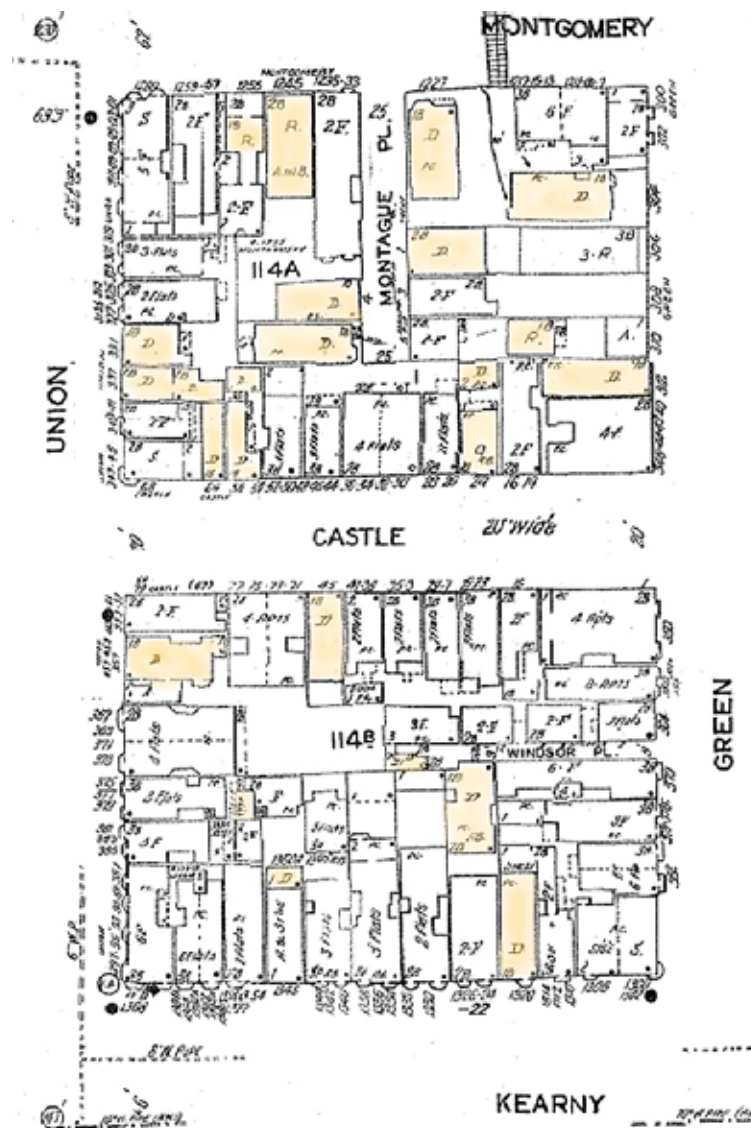


FIGURE 75. Portion of North Beach showing a large number of dwellings (highlighted). Sanborn Map Company 1998, vol. 1, p. 31. San Francisco Planning Department.



FIGURE 76. (1 of 3). Plans for a 2 floor dwelling, 776 Union St.
Original blueprints by Charles Fantoni, 1912.
Courtesy of the Northeast San Francisco Conservancy, Telegraph Hill Dwellers Archive.

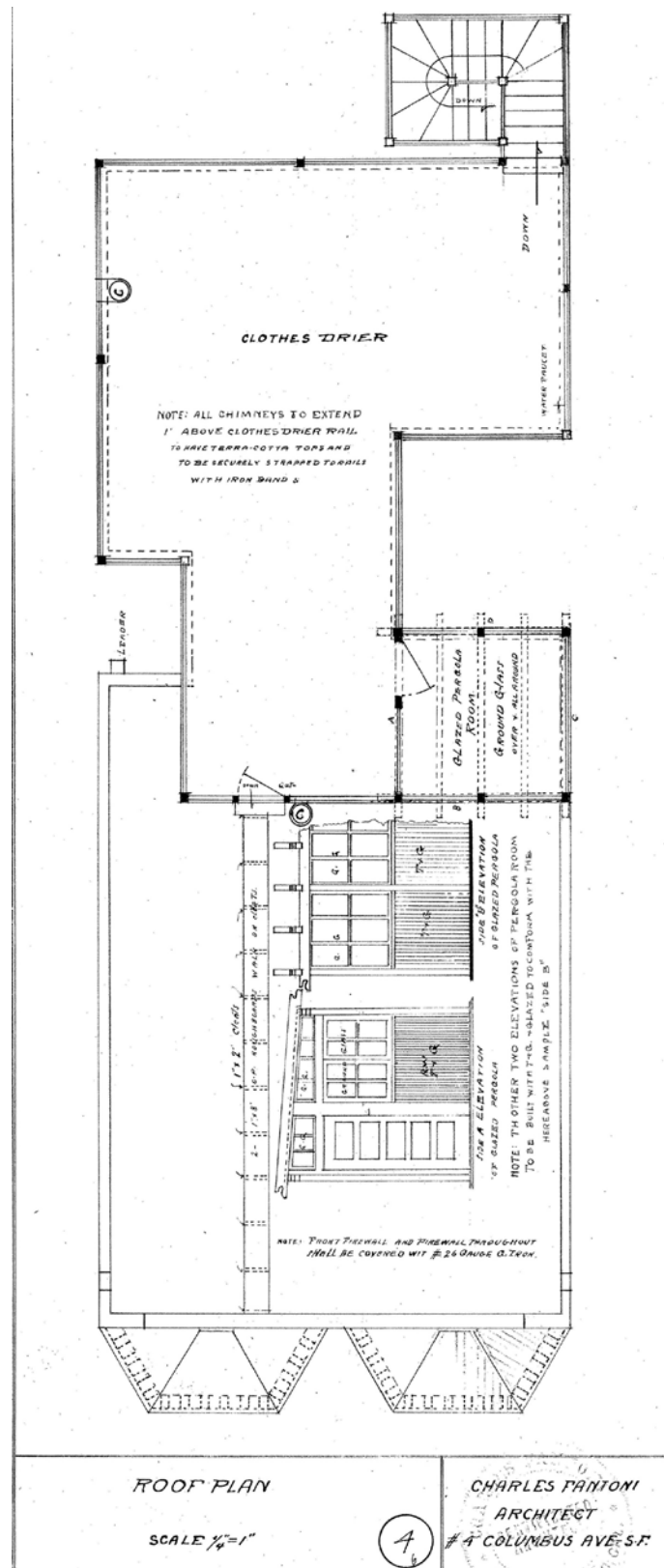


Figure 76 (3 of 3). Plans for a 2 floor dwelling, 776 Union St.
Original blueprints by Charles Fantoni, 1912.
Courtesy of the Northeast San Francisco Conservancy, Telegraph Hill Dwellers Archive.

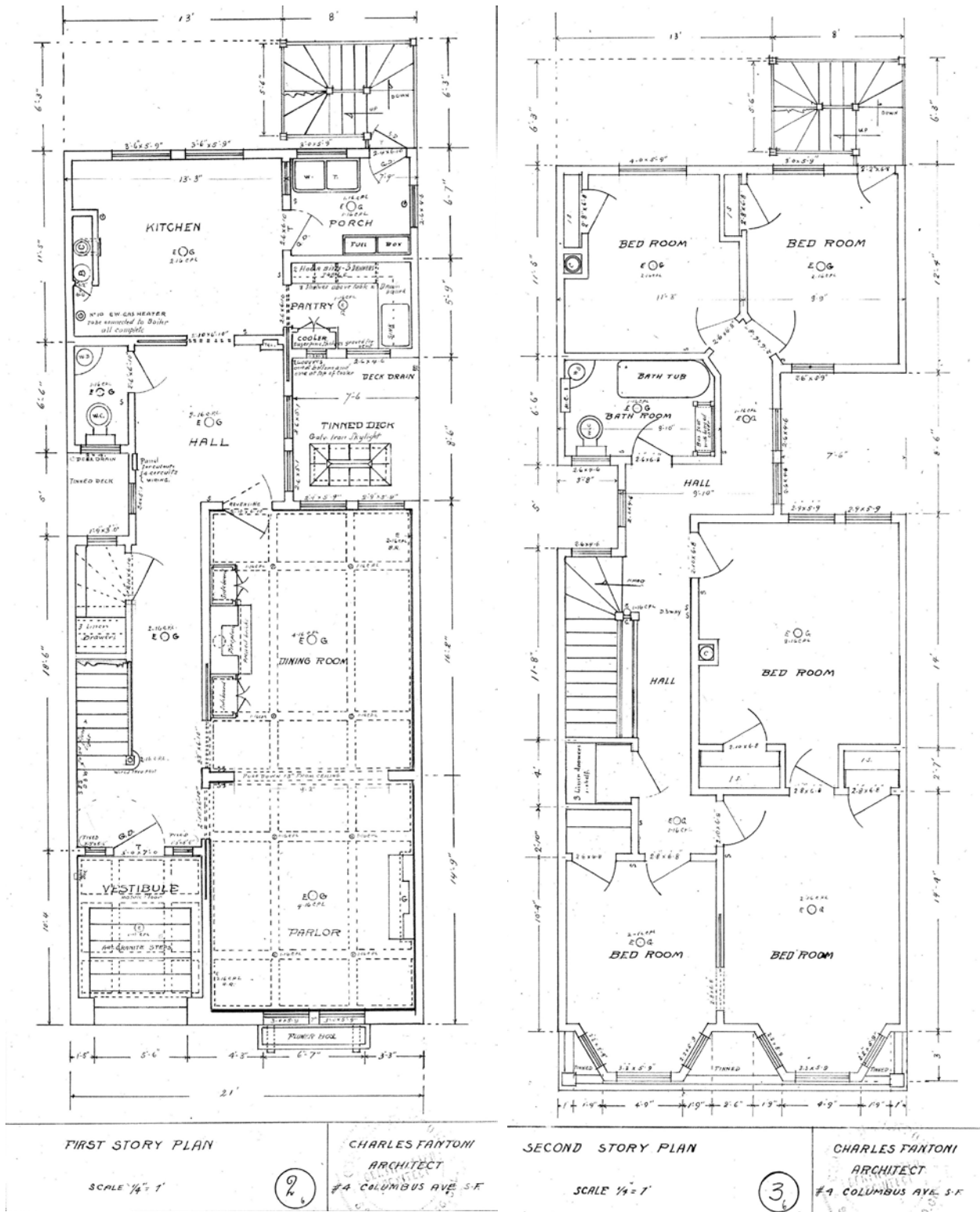


Figure 76 (2of 3). Plans for a 2 floor dwelling, 776 Union St.
Original blueprints by Charles Fantoni, 1912.
Courtesy of the Northeast San Francisco Conservancy, Telegraph Hill Dwellers Archive.

If any of these dwellings were either moved Camp Cottages or surviving temporary shacks, they would be of sub-standard construction. While the type of construction of any surviving temporary shacks has not been investigated, the Camp Cottages can be identified by their single walls lacking a stud frame and an interior wall.

Whether on the main streets or at the backs of lots, many dwellings in North Beach were Bonus Cottages. That is, they were houses built by homeowners who were wiped out in the fire, and they were paid a \$500 bonus by the Relief Corporation for rebuilding. Because Bonus Cottages were designed and built privately, like any ordinary houses, they are as varied in appearance as any other group of houses. (See discussion of “Housing Policy -- Reconstruction” on pages 33-38.)

Other dwellings in North Beach were Grant-and-Loan Cottages, also supported by the Relief Corporation. Most Grant-and-Loan Cottages were designed and built independently, but many were “built by the Housing Committee” on standard plans. **(Figure 77)** Those built by the Housing Committee were superficially similar to the Camp Cottages, but somewhat larger. They were typically rectangular in plan with a gable roof, shingled exterior walls, and four rooms (two in front and two in back); they were built of standard stud-frame construction (Russell Sage Foundation 1913: opposite p. 262, opposite p. 268, and opposite p. 275)

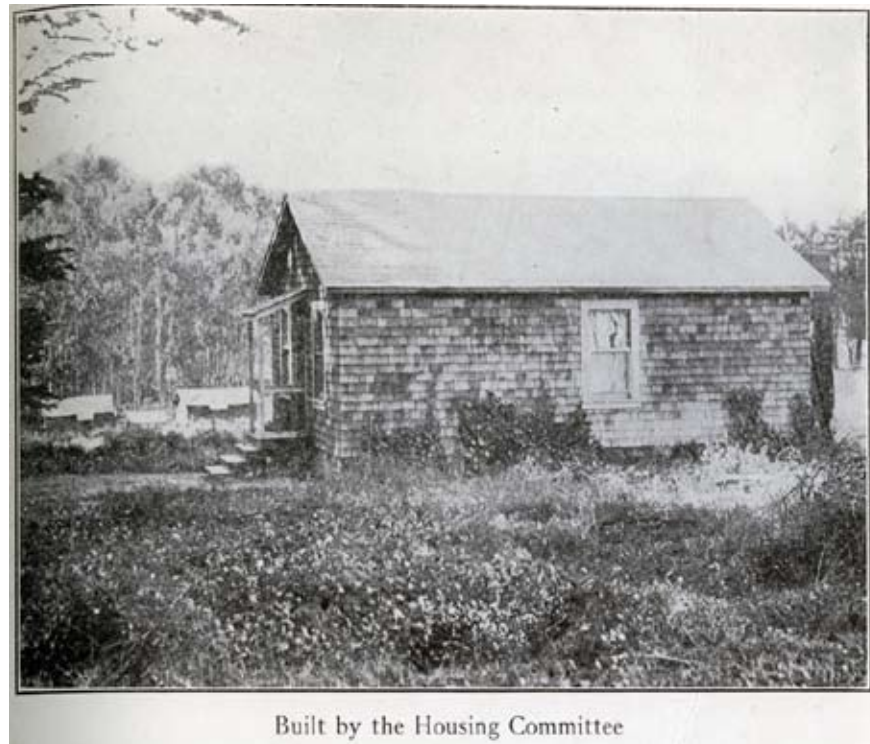


FIGURE 77. Grant and Loan Cottage Built by the Housing Committee.
Russell Sage Foundation 1913, facing p. 268.

In the building laws of 1901-1903 in effect at the time of the earthquake, in the law of July 1906 allowing construction to resume after the earthquake, and in the law of 1909, a dwelling was defined as “a building which shall be intended or designed for or used as the home or residence of not more than two separate and distinct families or households, and in which not more than fifteen rooms shall be used for the accommodation of boarders, and no part of which structure is used as a store or for any business purpose. Two or more such dwellings may be connected on each story and used for boarding purposes, provided the halls and stairs of

each house shall be left unaltered and kept open and in use as such.” (San Francisco Board of Public Works 1906: 19) In other words, a dwelling might provide for two households or fifteen boarders but has only one kitchen and perhaps only one bath and toilet.

In its Bonus Cottage program, the Relief Corporation appears not to have distinguished between a dwelling for one (or two) households, and other types of residences including flats ranging in size from two-story, two-flat buildings to three-story, four-flat buildings with stores on the ground floor. Each of these was illustrated in the San Francisco Relief Survey (Russell Sage Foundation 1913: opposite p. 245 and opposite p. 250) The fact that two adjacent dwellings could be joined to function as a single boarding house raises the possibility that some of the small dwellings on alleys and at the back of North Beach lots functioned this way.

The term “dwelling” in the building laws, was also used on Sanborn maps (and abbreviated “D”). The same buildings were usually called “cottages” on building permit applications and contract notices.

“Dwelling” was intended to be a neutral term. Cottage was a new usage not given in the 1906 *Century Dictionary and Cyclopedia* (Whitney 1906) in the definition of the word — denoting a simple city house for a laborer and his family. In 1902, Sturgis came close to its usage in San Francisco (probably coined by the real estate industry): “In the nineteenth century, a country house supposed to be simple as compared with the residences of the wealthy people in the neighborhood.” This was an evolution of its origins in England as “A small country house; the residence of a farm laborer or an agriculturist of small means.” (Sturgis 1989: 693-694) In 1908, The *San Francisco Call* referred to houses for “workingmen” as cottages (*San Francisco Call*, 21 June 1908, p. 24).

The inhabitants of a dwelling might have had a variety of compositions — a household or family of parents and children sometimes with other relatives, servants, boarders, and lodgers; a residential building for two households (three or more households using one entrance was an apartment building); a boarding house whose proprietor provided meals for unrelated boarders; a house of prostitution; or perhaps other arrangements.

Flats

Flats, in their many variations are by far the most common building type in North Beach. In the building code, “‘Flats’ is a building of two or more stories containing separate self-contained dwellings, each having an independent street entrance.” In other words, in contrast to a dwelling where two households might live separately in one unit except for a shared kitchen and bath, in flats each household is entirely separate, having its own kitchen and bath, and its own entrance from the outside. (San Francisco Board of Public Works 1906: 19) **(Figure 78)**

Flats first appeared in the San Francisco Sanborn maps in 1899. While it seems likely that the building type was older, research has not been done on this question. Only a few flats were marked as such, in scattered locations, on the 1899 maps. Flats were built on main streets, on alleys, and at the backs of lots. Flats with two units were similar in size and appearance to dwellings for single households.

The Relief Corporation supported the construction of flats in its Bonus Cottage program as cited above. Because of this, a homeowner before the earthquake could rebuild a similar sized building on the same lot with an entirely separate unit for rental income.

Flats varied in size and configuration. At the same time, all flats had common features.



FIGURE 78. Kitchen Interior, 1932.
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library (AAC-5878).

Plan

A flat is a residential unit that stretches from the front to the back of a building on a single floor. A building with flats has no lobby or public corridors; each flat has its own entry either from the exterior or from a common staircase at the front. (**Figure 79**)

Flats generally come in variations of standard types with either two, three, four, or six flats in the building. In two- and three-flats buildings, the units are normally stacked on top of each other and each is entered from a door that opens onto the street. In four- and six-flats buildings, there is a symmetrical arrangement with either two parallel stacks of two flats each or two parallel stacks of three flats each; these are both served by a common central staircase at the front with a window or balcony at each landing, leading to the name Romeo flats. According to Albert Armstrong, a prolific builder of flats during the reconstruction boom: “It looks as though the three, four, and five-room apartment flat is to be the most popular dwelling in San Francisco . . . There is more money to be made from these flats than from the six and seven room ones.” (*San Francisco Call*, 22 January 1908)

Flats are multi-unit versions of urban rowhouses in which each building largely fills its lot (or leaves ten feet or more of open space at the rear) and abuts its side neighbors. Many also encroach on the public space by projecting bay windows. Because of the necessity under the law of providing natural light and ventilation to every room in buildings built side by side, small light courts or light wells are built on the sides of flats. (**Figure 80**) This requirement generates a standard size and floor plan. Each flat has a long straight hall down one side from the front door. Flats usually have four rooms: the front and back room are exposed to light and air through windows in exterior walls; the two interior rooms and the bathroom (or rooms, when the toilet and bath are separated), are exposed to light and air through a small light court part way back on the side of the building. Some flats are narrowed at the rear with a set back from the side lot line, permitting light from windows on the slot; this is a back end version of the front end “slot”, identified by Delehanty in *San Francisco Victorians* (Delehanty 1991:132, 133) Each flat is thus in an asymmetrical floor plan that might be described as a half barbell, with wider rooms at the front and the back of the unit and narrower rooms in the center at the light court. In four- and six-flats buildings where there are two flats on each floor, the overall plan, with plans of two adjacent flats in mirror images of each other, might be described as a full barbell.

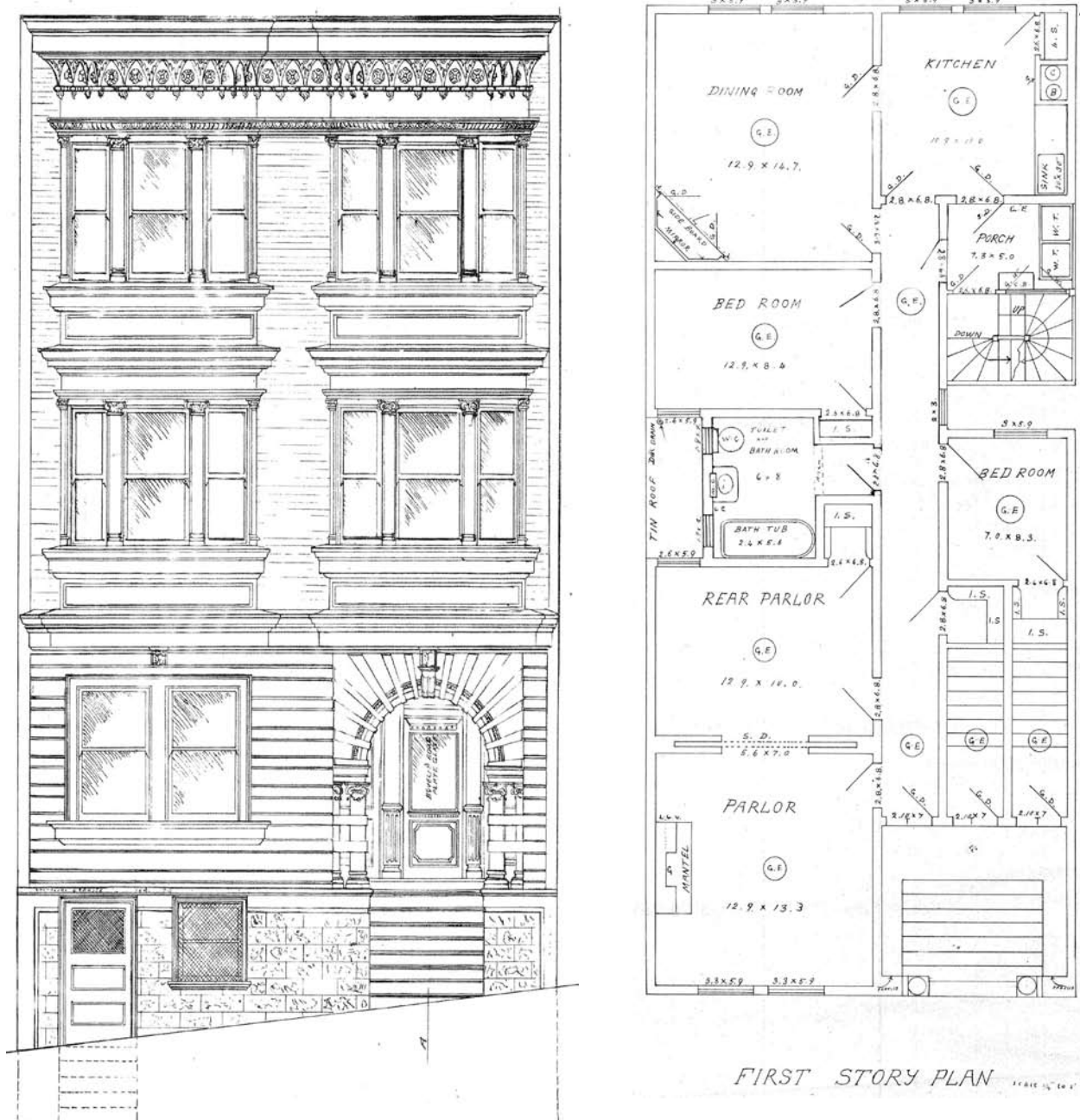
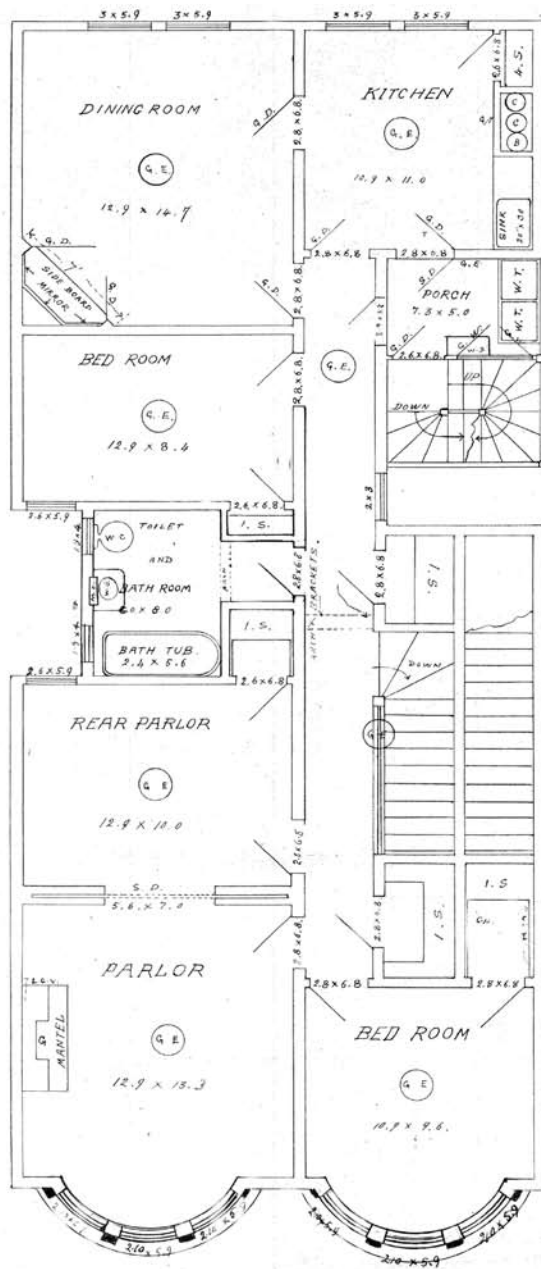


FIGURE 79. (1 of 2). Plans for a 3 floor-3flats building, 1934-38 Mason St.

Original blueprints by Charles Fantoni, 1907.

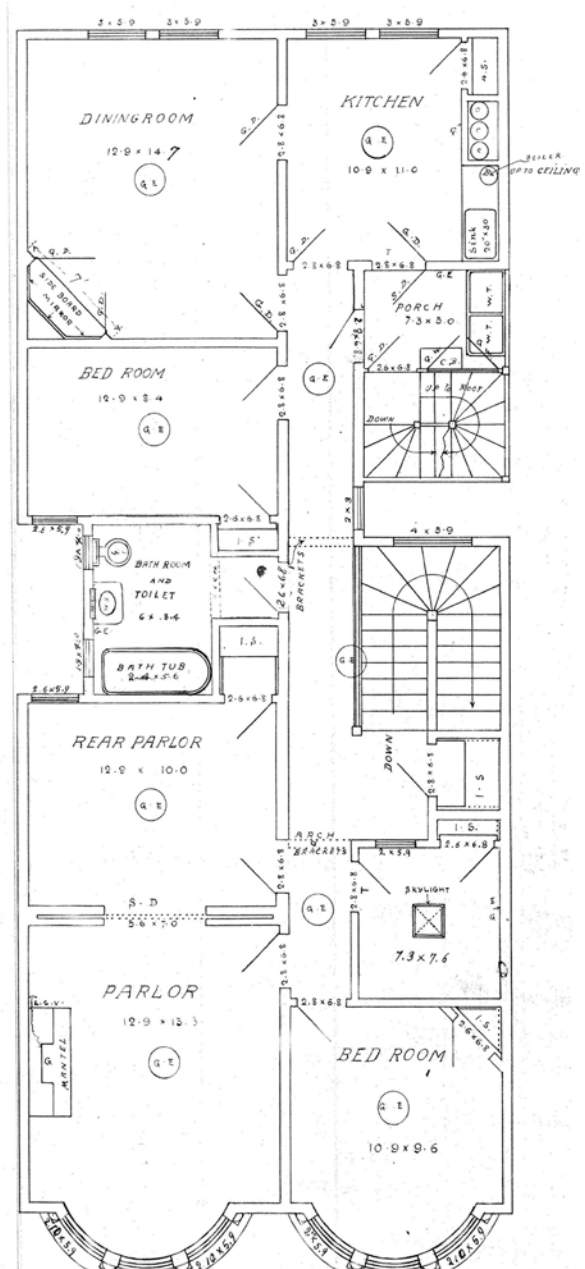
Although the three entry doors are not visible on the front elevation, they are clearly shown on the first story plan.

Courtesy of the Northeast San Francisco Conservancy, Telegraph Hill Dwellers Archive.



SECOND STORY PLAN scale 3/16" = 1'

C. FANTONI



THIRD STORY PLAN scale 3/16" = 1'

C. FANTONI

Figure 79 (2 of 2). Plans for a 3 floor-3flats building, 1934-38 Mason St.
Original blueprints by Charles Fantoni, 1907.

Courtesy of the Northeast San Francisco Conservancy, Telegraph Hill Dwellers Archive.



FIGURE 80. Interior with windows to light wells, 1932.
San Francisco History Center,
San Francisco Public Library (AAC-5877).

Because of the way most of the buildings were inhabited – families, extended families of four to eight or more people with children or lodgers or both – the three front rooms were commonly used as bedrooms, also a front room with a bay window would often be labeled “parlor” on plans. The back room was a kitchen. In addition, behind the kitchen was a porch, of lighter construction than the main building and with more window area, allowing light to enter the kitchen; sometimes this was referred to as a “cooking porch”, although the stove and its flue was always within the main kitchen space.

A rear stairway led down from the kitchen to a basement, used for winemaking, garbage, and storage. In later years, basements of early flats buildings were often modified for use as parking garages. Flats buildings built in the 1920s were often built with parking garages included in the basements.

Roofs

The earliest post-fire flats covered their entire lots until new regulations in 1907 required a small yard at the rear. The problem of this extreme lot coverage produced its own solution: the residents of North Beach were “not . . . to be deprived of yard space by the fact that the new structures covered their entire lots. So, with hardly an exception, their building plans embraced the erection of stairs to the level roofs, where, with floors and railings, hydrants and clothes poles, homemade benches and hammocks, they converted the house tops into sunny, breezy, spacious yards for community use of the crowded tenants below.” From the roofs they had views; they kept flowers and chickens; they dried laundry; children and pets played; people slept, sewed, read, and talked. (Adams, C.G. 1911: 330) **(Figure 81)**



FIGURE 81. Typical use of roof deck in North Beach.
Photo by Dorothea Lange, ca. 1943.
Oakland Museum of California (LNG42030.4).

Basements

High basements were used for wine-making: “Every Italian family made wine in the grape season, August, September, October. Everyone had a wine cellar.” Families bought grapes from railroad cars that came by car ferry from the north bay to the Embarcadero. A typical family used about one ton of grapes. (Dillon 1985: 132) According to Dobie, during the wine-making season, “the sidewalks are slippery with grapes and the air fruity with the smell of seething grape juice.” (Dobie 1939: 188)

Bay Windows, Natural Light, and Room Size

The character of flats is related to lot size and location. Alley lots are typically narrower than lots on main streets – 20 feet wide on alleys, and 25 to 35 feet wide on main streets, or combinations of lots in either place. Twenty-foot lots were built with two- or three-flats buildings, but were too narrow for four- or six-flats buildings. Lots as narrow as 28.75 feet were developed with four- or six-flats buildings but lots as wide as 36.417 feet were developed with three-flats buildings.

The presence and placement of “bay, oriel, or swell windows” was governed by the 1906 building law (Part XI, Section 264; Part XII, Sections 290, 294). Because it was prohibited for such windows “to project over the streets when said streets are less than thirty-five (35) feet wide,” bay windows were not built on alleys unless the building was set back at least three feet from the building line.

Bay windows were, however, frequently built on the main streets. Because “the finish of their soffits, the lowest part of their underside, must be at least ten (10) feet above the sidewalk,” bay windows were not usually built below the second floor. Bay windows could be a maximum of ten feet wide and could project three feet from the wall; they had to be spaced at least five feet apart unless more money was spent on more lumber, in which case they could be two and a half feet apart.

Alley flats tended to be dark because alleys were narrow, their lots were narrow, and they could not be provided with more light from bay windows. They were cheaper to build, their rents were lower, their residents were poorer, and they were more crowded.

Flats on the main streets were more comfortable. They had more light from wider streets and bay windows. A four-room flats building on a larger lot cost more to build because more materials were needed and more labor was required to assemble them. Buildings with bay windows were more expensive because the construction of bay windows required more materials and more highly skilled carpenters. Round bay windows in particular required skilled carpenters and more expensive materials (curved wood and glass).

Room size was a function of the width of the flat so that, ironically, a flat on a twenty-foot flat-fronted alley lot had larger rooms than a flat in a bay windowed six-flats building on a lot less than forty feet wide.

Alley flats were generally less ornamented, another reason they cost less. Flats on main streets cost more because they had more ornamentation, although like the ornamentation on the alley flats buildings, it was generally all mass produced and cheaper than custom-made ornament.

Tenements and Romeo Flats

In the few years before the 1906 earthquake, two new types of building were becoming increasingly common in North Beach, and elsewhere in San Francisco — small flats and tenements.

In addition to dwellings, hotels, and lodging houses, large multi-unit residences called tenements were built

for the poor. According to the 1901 building law: “A ‘tenement house’ is a building similar to an apartment house, except that the tenements of which it is composed have no self-contained conveniences”; that is, the several units shared toilets, baths, and kitchens. Toilets and baths may have been in separate structures in the back and kitchens were sometimes non-existent — in violation of the laws.

Problems with these buildings were noticed as early as 1904 by nurses working for the Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Association. (San Francisco Housing Association 1911: 11) A good-housing advocate named Henry Fisk described to the Commonwealth Club of California seven examples of unwholesome and unsanitary conditions in buildings in San Francisco, five of them in North Beach, in the period before the earthquake. Fisk described overcrowding, untended children, rooms without light or fresh air, inadequate toilets, filth from animals (one example had horses, rabbits, chickens, dogs, cats, and rats), minimal yards (where children might play), and people living in basements. (Fisk 1906: 71-73)

Fisk also referred to the other new building type in that period, small flats of two or three units in two or three stories. He did this by including flats as a subcategory of a tenement house, a universal practice among good-housing advocates: “A tenement house may be an exceedingly wholesome and convenient place in which to live, as is evidenced by many of the houses which would come under the title, but which are called flats in San Francisco.” (Fisk 1906: 71)

When the new building law was passed and construction began again in July 1906: “The authorities, glad enough to encourage anyone to build, hardly enforced the mild provisions of the existing building laws. Merely that a building would not fall was all that they asked. Thus, tenements, not homes, were built. . . . As a result of the rapid rebuilding and official laxity, the short six months following April 1906 brought a problem which, though it had harassed other cities for years, had hardly presented itself in San Francisco. The tenement house problem rose full panoplied, as it were, in a night.” (San Francisco Housing Association 1911: 6-7)

In a paper published in October 1906, only three months after building resumed, Fisk wrote that conditions in newly and rapidly built tenements were even worse than before, citing three principal examples in North Beach. The most infamous example, known as the Cuneo Flats was described by others as well and illustrated in photographs (Griffith 1911: 20-22; Baccari 2006: 116) and shown on Sanborn maps. Located at the northeast corner of Bay and Leavenworth Streets, the Cuneo Flats were an investment of A.P. Giannini for the estate of his father-in-law, Joseph Cuneo, who had died in 1902. Unlike anything that survives in San Francisco today, the flats occupied a full 50-vara lot with three narrow buildings running parallel to each other the full width of the lot (137 feet 6 inches). Two of the buildings were three stories high and one was six stories, all above basements. They were built to the lot lines, separated by only eight and twelve feet so that there was no usable open space on the property. The population was 300 people with 180 children. (Fisk 1906: 74-75; San Francisco Housing Association 1913: 30; *New York Times* 1913) **(Figure 82)**

An article promoting the Cuneo flats as they were designed by architects Shea & Shea put them in their best light: “The Cuneo estate has undertaken the task of rehabilitating the people of the north end of the city who have been rendered homeless through the late disaster, and will provide healthy, comfortable homes for residents of the Latin quarter at rates within their reach . . . These flats and apartments will consist of two, three, four, and five rooms each, constructed and arranged with a view to comfort, light, ventilation and proper sanitary provisions for all tenants. The hallways will be well lighted and large balconies will surround the buildings, which have the appearance of large comfortable residences.” (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 30 July 1906) They were promoted with “considerable advertising in the newspapers and have generally been thought excellent in their appointments.” (Fisk 1906: 74)



FIGURE 82. Cuneo Flats, Bay St. and Leavenworth St.
J. B. Monaco (jbmonaco.com, Telegraph Hill and North Beach Photo Gallery, image 50 of 91).

However, as construction proceeded even an article that was intended to praise the project revealed some of the problems identified by the housing reformers. According to the *Call*, the Cuneo flats were among “the more pretentious structures . . . J. Cuneo & Co. are housing the fishermen in tenements where the windows bristle with babies and the mothers can see the returning sails of the crab fleet from the back porch . . . In each [building] are nineteen flats with the kitchen walls done in sage green and the living rooms in pink. These colors are fetching, and the . . . flats are more crowded than a relief camp . . . It is true that the fishermen do not boast a bathroom . . . But, then, the Pacific Ocean is next door . . . So all glory to the Italians.” (*San Francisco Call*, 26 August 1906)

While Fisk approved of the small flats and another writer called them “neat light and airy modern buildings” (Adams, C.G. 1911: 330) one influential critic, Alice Griffith, wrote of “the evil of the three-family building,” preferring the city before 1906, with “whole districts covered with small houses, vine clad, fragrant with flowers.” (Griffith 1911: 17, 18) Griffith, Fisk, and others advocated a city law regulating the construction of tenements based on a New York City law that would include all flats as a type of tenement and subject to the same regulation.

On 15 July 1907, the Board of Supervisors “passed to print the ordinance regulating the construction and maintenance of tenement houses as recommended by a special committee appointed at the last Episcopalian convention.” (*San Francisco Call*, 16 July 1907) Griffith’s view was that by the time of the ordinance, hundreds of tenements had already been built and that “every law of hygiene had been violated.” (Griffith 1911: 22) This view was echoed in another report on bad housing: “similar conditions exist for almost every house erected before July, 1907.” (San Francisco Housing Association 1911: 45)

Despite the passage of this law the problems did not abate. Indeed, it appears to have encouraged the expanded construction of a new building type viewed by the good-housing advocates as a menace — the Romeo Flat. Romeo Flats, or at least buildings by that name, existed before the earthquake — a six-unit Romeo Flat was advertised for sale in the *San Francisco Call* in March 1906. (*San Francisco Call*, 11 March 1906) Some were built after the earthquake and before the tenement house ordinance. But the largest numbers were built after the tenement house ordinance. (**Figure 83**)

In an article entitled “The Romeo Flat–San Francisco” Alice Griffith located the main problem area as North Beach: “the spectacular tenement of New York does not exist [in San Francisco], but in the three- and four-story wooden buildings crowded in the narrow alleys of the North Beach district, dark rooms, lacking in some instances even a window into an unventilated shaft, lie as festers, breeding disease and sin, though unseen and unsuspected by the casual passerby.” Following “house to house investigations . . . made by the social workers of the Latin quarter,” she stated: “The crux of the present situation is the Romeo Flat, for by means of this type of building widespread evasion of the law has been legalized.” (Griffith 1911: 18)

Griffith believed that Romeo Flats were tenements and were not in compliance with the tenement house ordinance. She and others considered the municipal ordinance to be a weak law. Right away they began advocating an amended ordinance that specifically treated Romeo Flats as tenements and that required a minimum rear yard of ten feet. (*San Francisco Call*, 25 September 1907) They also advocated a state tenement house law with these provisions.



FIGURE 83. (1 of 2). Plans for a 3 floor Romeo flats building (6 flats), 471-77 Vallejo St.
Original blueprints by Charles Fantoni, 1907.

Courtesy of the Northeast San Francisco Conservancy, Telegraph Hill Dwellers Archive.

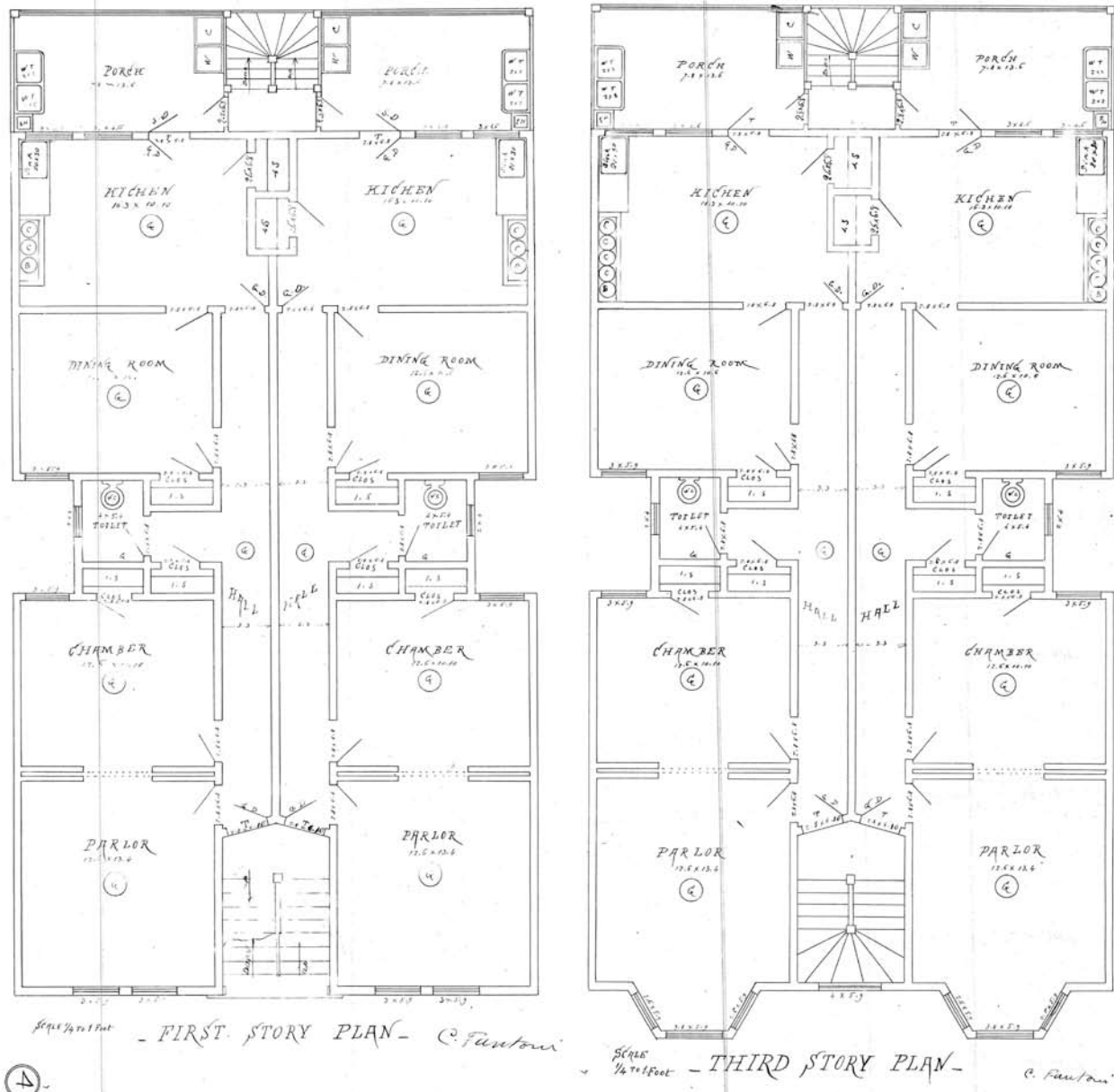


FIGURE 83 (2 of 2). Plans for a 3 floor Romeo flats building (6 flats), 471-77 Vallejo St.
Original blueprints by Charles Fantoni, 1907.

Courtesy of the Northeast San Francisco Conservancy, Telegraph Hill Dwellers Archive.

During the period of this controversy, from September 1907 to February 1908, an outbreak of bubonic plague, carried by rat fleas, created an enhanced appreciation for healthy, sanitary buildings. While a previous epidemic of the plague, from 1900 to 1904 in Chinatown, was blamed on the Chinese, this outbreak didn't touch Chinatown but appeared in scattered locations throughout the city including North Beach and in building conditions widely existing in North Beach. The plague ended after an inspection of every building in the city, a general clean-up of debris, raising of Camp Cottages still in the refugee camps and others that were so close to the ground that they provided a cat-free nesting area for rats, the prohibition of houses over stables, the removal of most chicken coops, the construction of concrete floors in basements, the condemnation of 493 houses and the demolition of 1,713 houses throughout the city. (Todd 1909) Although published information on the epidemic did not mention specific locations, North Beach was strongly implied as a principal problem area. (*San Francisco Call*, 24 January 1909)

The controversy over Romeo Flats was temporarily resolved in the summer of 1909. On 7 June 1909, the City Attorney ruled that Romeo Flats were not tenement houses but flats, and on 24 July 1909, the state Tenement House Law was passed with the same definition. (Griffith 1911: 19-20) Judging from the articles and advertisements in the *San Francisco Call*, this led to an immediate increase in the number of Romeo Flats beginning in June 1909. (*San Francisco Call* 1901-1910) At that time, Griffith described Romeo Flats as a “means used by unscrupulous landlords to house large numbers in quarters insufficiently aired and lighted.” (*San Francisco Call*, 9 June 1909) In 1911, Griffith wrote that since the city attorney ruled that flats were not tenements, “195 of the 275 wooden buildings for three or more families have been Romeo Flats” and that “It is safe to assume that not one-quarter of these have yards and that the great majority are without adequate light and ventilation.” (Griffith 1911: 20)

Although the city and state both passed regulations for tenement houses, poor conditions persisted, leading to the organization of the San Francisco Housing Association (SFHA) in April 1910 because, according to president Langley Porter, “laws do not enforce themselves.” The purpose of the organization was to promote good legislation and to educate the public. (Ihlder 1912: 1961)

Just as the Cuneo Flats at the north end of North Beach were an emblem of what was wrong before the tenement house laws were passed, for the SFHA, the new public example was the central North Beach block bound by Kearny, Green, Union, and Grant, excluding the Grant Avenue frontage, but including what were formerly known as Lafayette and Sonora streets, now known as Varennes and Sonoma streets. (**Figure 84**) In *The Survey: A Journal of Constructive Philanthropy*, John Ihlder asked: “Can any one approve the block . . . ? There, lot after lot 19 or 20 by 52 carries two flats in each story of a three story building. Nowhere is there any provision made for light or ventilation for inside rooms. Investigation will reveal many other blocks that differ but little from this.” These areas, he said, are “more solidly packed together than those of the worst parts of New York.” (Ihlder 1912: 1962) The core of this analysis was repeated in the *First Report of the SFHA* which was largely based on North Beach, the only complete neighborhood in the city where “intensive studies have been possible”; “During the past four years the housing conditions of the Latin Quarter have been the subject of investigation and discussion.” (San Francisco Housing Association 1911: 8-9, 11)

The SFHA was successful in its efforts to strengthen regulations on tenement houses, with revised state laws on 21 April 1911 and 13 June 1913. The SFHA reported that enforcement of the law was better after 1911; the 1913 revision brought lodging houses and hotels within the tenement house regulations.

If the SFHA was at least partly successful in achieving one of its goals — improved legislation — it failed in the other — public education about the need for regulating tenements. Referring to a 1912 report by the Building Department on conditions in San Francisco housing, the SFHA concluded, “in San Francisco, the public at large, and also the press, have remained absolutely indifferent to the report and to the conditions it revealed.” (San Francisco Housing Association 1913: 9-10)

Perhaps the reasons for this indifference were that for the most part, flats and Romeo Flats were considered by many people to be desirable places to live: “These buildings . . . are built after the best patterns, stout, substantial, neat, modern in every detail and of a pleasing appearance to the eye”; “These buildings are rented or leased or bought long before their completion is an assured fact ... because they are good investments.” (*San Francisco Call*, 22 January 1908) If the conditions in some units were bad, the owners themselves often occupied the worst, indicating that the quality of their housing was a secondary consideration; referring to a survey, the SFHA reported: “the 82 owners are residents in tenements and almost invariably are found occupying the darkest apartments.” (San Francisco Housing Association 1911: 22) Housing advocates like Alice Griffith thought everyone should live in a house with a garden in front and back, but few could afford

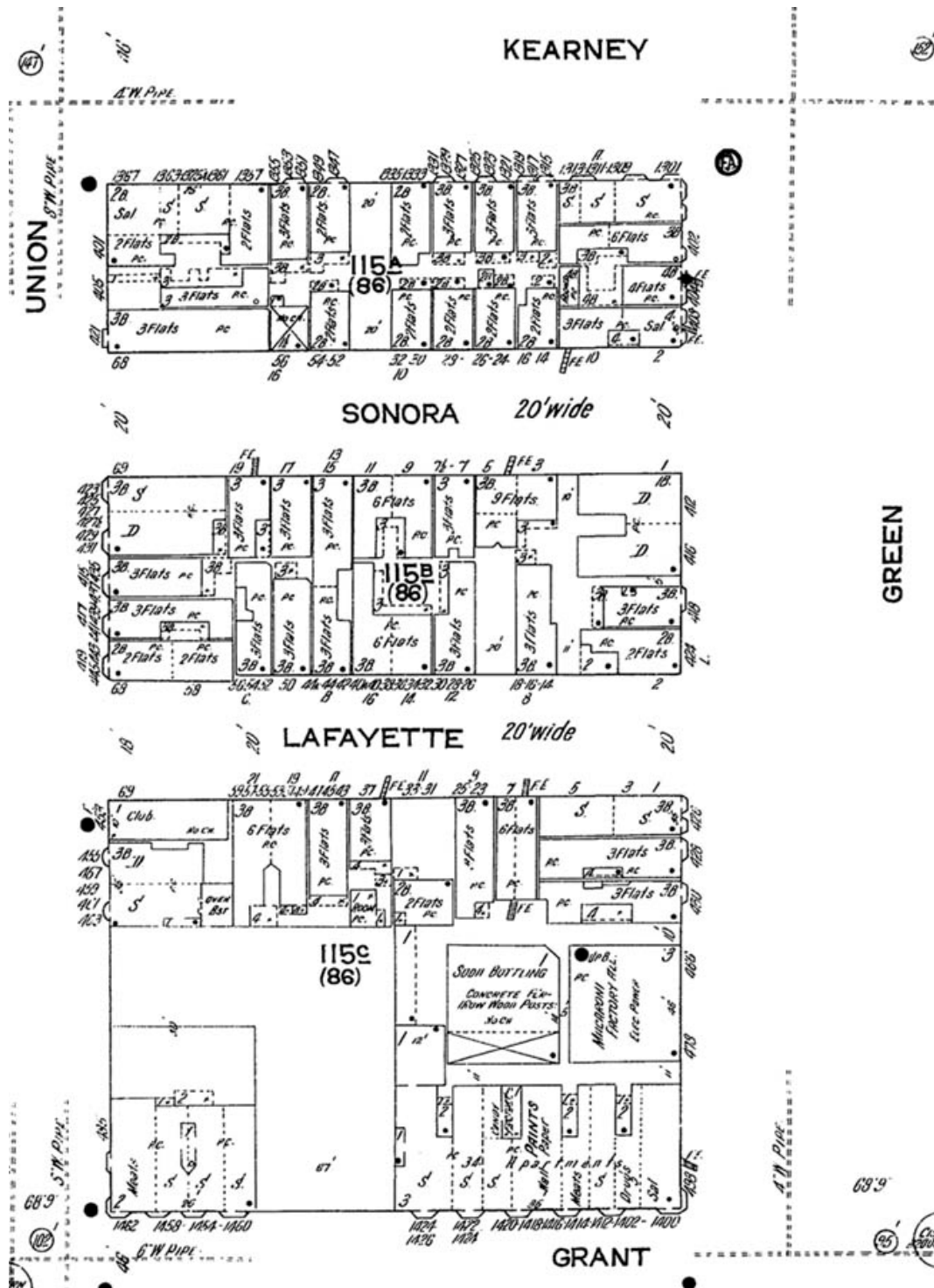


FIGURE 84. Area criticized for unhealthy conditions from concentration of Romeo Flats.
Sanborn Map Company, 1913, vol. 1, p. 31. Library of Congress website via San Francisco Public Library.

it and many may have preferred more urban types of housing, or preferred to save money on housing for other purposes.

Albert Armstrong of the Armstrong Construction and Engineering Company was a builder of and advocate for Romeo Flats. Armstrong praised them from the point of view of the builder and investor: “Under no other system can so many rooms be put in a building occupying a similar amount of ground space. Where ordinarily one flat will occupy a 25 foot front, the Romeo flats are so well arranged that two of them can be put on a frontage of 25 or 30 feet, still providing space for good sized rooms, well lighted and arranged with the utmost convenience . . . From the owner’s standpoint they are the most profitable, for there is so great an economy of space obtained without lessening the size of the rooms that far more flats can be put up on a lot than would be possible on a lot of the same size if the ordinary apartment house style were adopted.” (*San Francisco Call*, 22 January 1908)

But Armstrong also endorsed them as housing: “These flats also lend themselves to a peculiarly attractive style of architecture . . . Not only is it a beautiful style, but it affords more light and room than any other that I know of. This makes these flats good for the tenants.” (*San Francisco Call*, 22 January 1908) When Griffith “tried to get testimony in court against the developers, whom she saw as cruel speculators, she got nowhere. No one would testify. All of the residents were content with their low rents and with quarters that, in comparison with those of Italy, were comfortable indeed.” (Dillon 1985: 160)

Apartment Houses

Apartment buildings were a new American building type in the late nineteenth century. Initially marketed to the upper middle class, their public image suffered when they were regulated by tenement house laws together with multiple-unit residential buildings, typically called tenements, for the poorest people.

The first building laws after the earthquake distinguished between the two types. An apartment house was defined by the City of San Francisco as “a building containing separate apartments, with self-contained conveniences for three or more families having a street entrance common to all.” In contrast, a tenement house was “a building similar to an apartment house, except that the tenements of which it is composed have no self-contained conveniences.” (San Francisco Board of Public Works 1906: 19) In other words, individual residence units in an apartment house each had toilets, baths, and kitchens whereas in a tenement house toilets, baths, and kitchens might be shared. Under the tenement house laws soon passed by the State of California these distinctions were eliminated by eliminating the earlier type of tenement house — now all buildings under the tenement house laws were apartment buildings containing all conveniences. (California 1915) (**Figure 85**)

For the same reason that many builders in North Beach evaded the tenement house laws by building Romeo flats, few built apartment houses in the period of reconstruction after the earthquake — cost. Romeo flats were cheaper to build and could be built more intensively on the land than buildings subject to the tenement house law, and apartment buildings cost more and were built less intensively than Romeo flats.

Considering the character of the population in North Beach after the earthquake, relatively few apartment buildings were built. Even without the earthquake, there were big social changes underway in San Francisco in the first decade of the twentieth century. In particular, the economy was shifting from one that required many workers doing physical labor to one that required indoor workers, from blue collar to white collar. The new workers worked in offices and service businesses and were generally better educated.

The old labor force tended to work in industries and along the waterfront, and these workers lived in houses, flats, tenements, rooming houses, and lodging houses in areas where they could get to work, either by

Apartment house construction increased in the 1920s, especially at the north end of the neighborhood and at higher elevations on Telegraph Hill. This was for a complex of reasons. According to Olmsted, “The city construction of a boat harbor and the Marina Green between 1915 and 1927 made the northern section an even more desirable development.” (Bloomfield et al. 1982: 65) Also apartments were cheaper than houses, more private than hotels, and more comfortable for an increasing segment of the population.

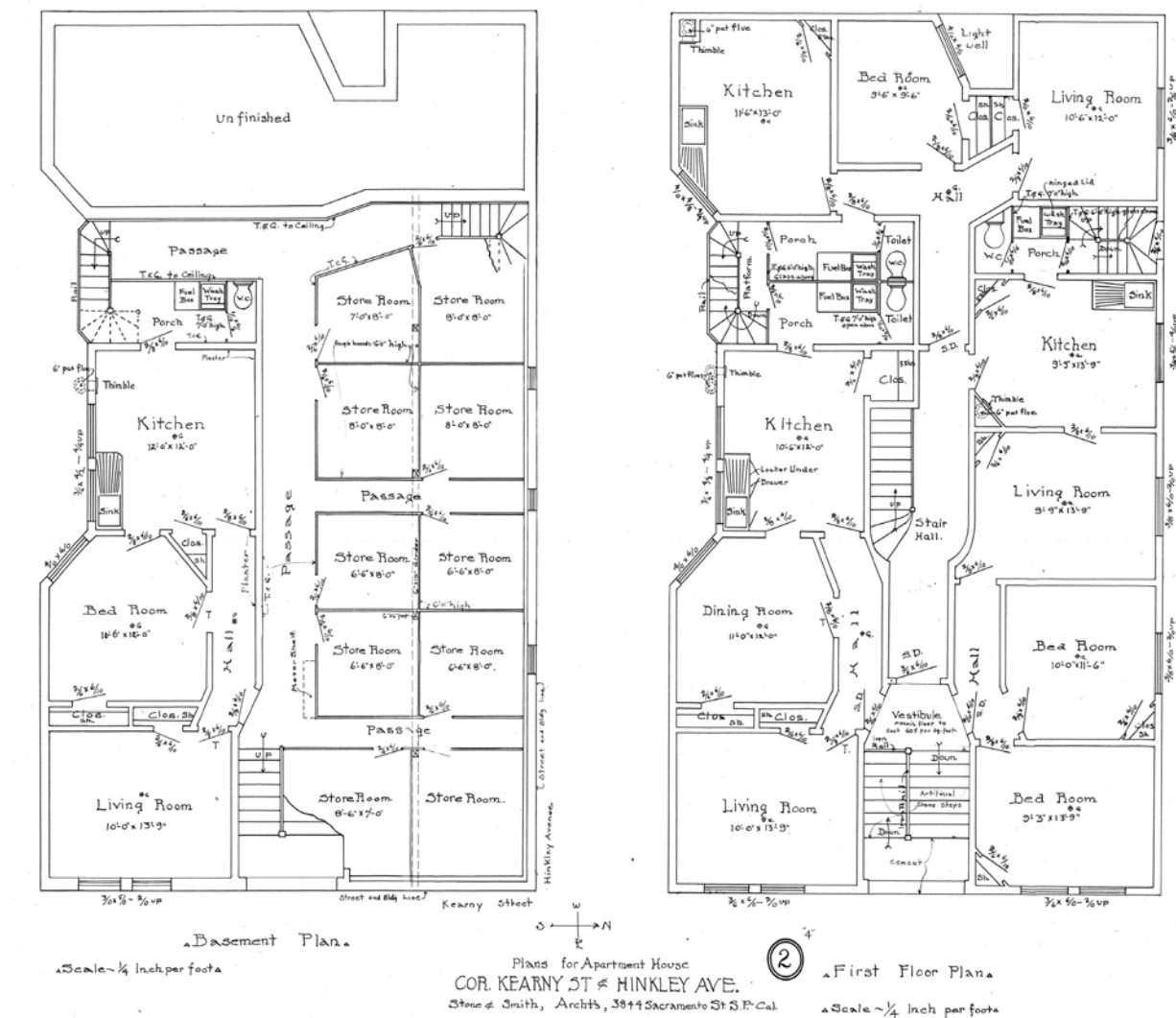


FIGURE 85. (1 of 2). Plans for a 3 floor apartment building (10 apartments), 1143-47 Kearny St.
Original blueprints by Stone and Smith, 1906.
Courtesy of the Northeast San Francisco Conservancy, Telegraph Hill Dwellers Archive.

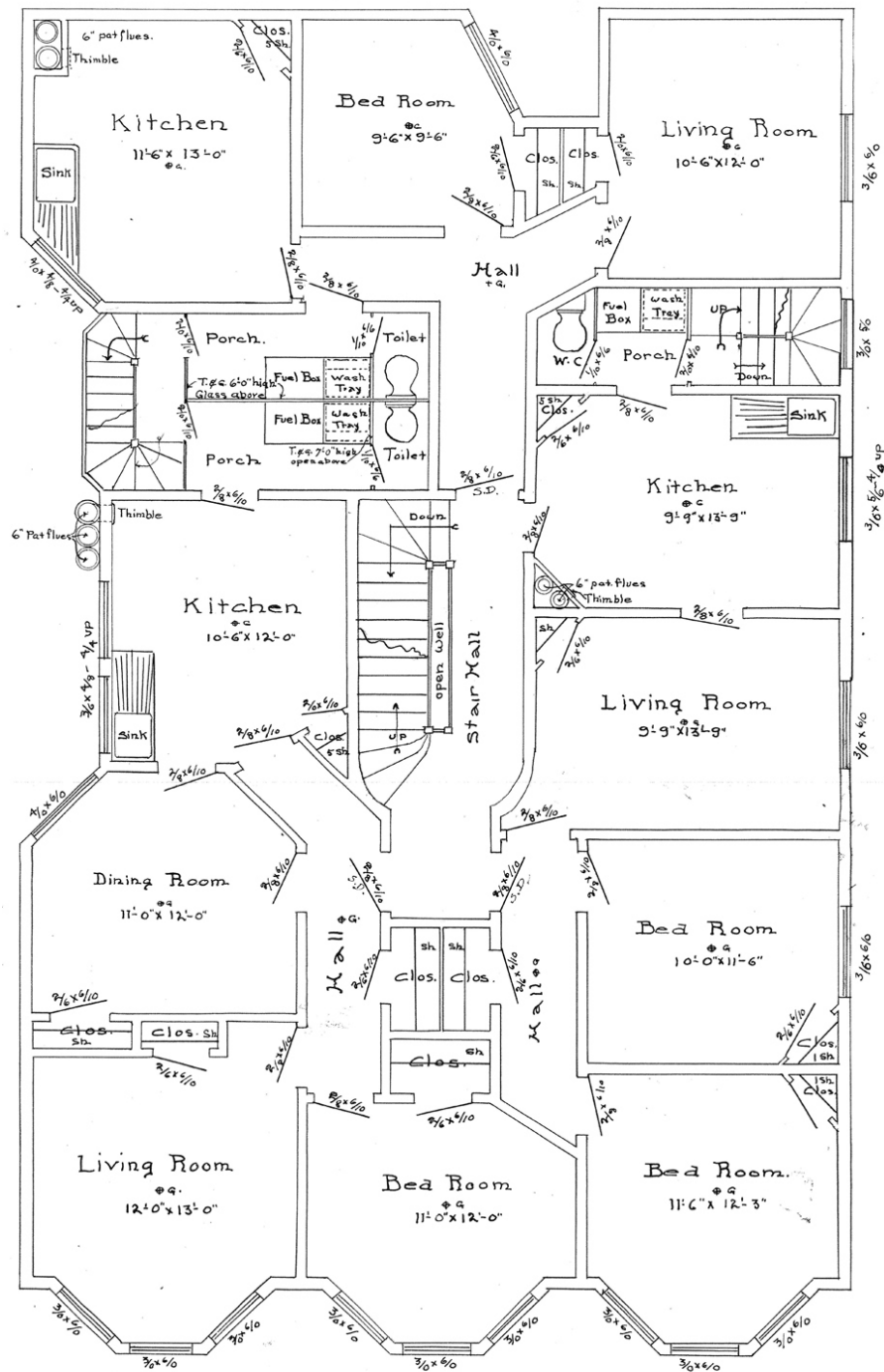


FIGURE 85 (2 of 2). Plans for a 3 floor apartment building (10 apartments), 1143-47 Kearny St.
Original blueprints by Stone and Smith, 1906.
Courtesy of the Northeast San Francisco Conservancy, Telegraph Hill Dwellers Archive.

Hotels

San Francisco had been a town of hotel-dwellers ever since the gold rush first peopled it entirely with men. An exuberant 1876 writer had declared, “The hotel is the San Franciscan’s home Gotham set the example in this hotel living. Chicago and St. Louis quickly followed; but San Francisco ... outstripped them all.” (Lloyd 1876:449)

In studying hotels as housing, Paul Groth has identified several groups of hotel dwellers: people who couldn’t afford or didn’t want to set up independent households, young professionals and young couples not settling in a single city or house, clerical and service employees whose incomes did not stretch far enough to permit full apartments or suburban flats, and seasonal workers.

There was never enough land to house all those who desired or needed to live within walking distance of the major city work centers. The earliest American solution to the middle and upper class need for multiple living was the hotel. At the high end, hotels provided servants and a central meal service, necessary before the days of convenience foods and home appliances. For the working classes, hotels provided flexibility for marginal and seasonal workers.

All hotels in North Beach were at the middle and low end of the spectrum. What were labeled hotels and lodging houses on the 1913 Sanborn maps of North Beach were classified by Groth as mid-priced hotels and rooming houses. There may also have been what he called cheap lodging houses. (Groth 1994: 305)

Most North Beach hotels were located on the streets connecting the neighborhood to other areas — Broadway, Columbus Avenue, Grant Avenue, and Stockton Street. Most were three- or four-story buildings with stores on the ground floor. The majority of North Beach hotels were rooming houses — typically, there may have been only one bath for every ten rooms, and there were no dining facilities or other amenities. A few hotels in the neighborhood were at the low end of the mid-priced hotel category. These had better room-bath ratios and there was a dining room or restaurant on the premises.

North Beach hotels located north of Broadway were of wood construction and were similar in appearance to flats. Those located on the south side of Broadway and along Columbus Avenue south of Broadway were within the boundaries of the Fire Limits described in the building law; these were of brick or concrete construction.

Because hotels were built as investments, and therefore not as personal necessities, they were somewhat slower to be started than homes and flats which were often built by their owners. Nevertheless, hotels were among the earliest permanent new buildings in North Beach. According to the *Chronicle*, the “first rooming house in this section of the city” was built by Gustav Harshall at 301 Columbus Avenue at the intersection of Broadway and Grant Avenue beginning 22 August 1906. Still standing, it is a four-story wood structure with sixty rooms (see Figure 113).

Another lodging house begun about the same time was built by the Cuneo and Costa Company at the northwest corner of Union Street and Jasper Place. It was a three story structure with seventy-five rooms. A.P. Giannini, general manager of the Cuneo and Costa Company, believed “that there is a bigger demand for lodging houses in this section than for any other class of building.” (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 1 September 1906)

These were followed by many more, especially on Broadway, Columbus Avenue, Grant Avenue, and Stockton streets. A well-known example is the Golden Eagle Hotel at 400 Broadway, first built in 1882, destroyed in 1906 and rebuilt at the same site after the earthquake and fire (see Figure 112). Plans for a hotel building at 145 Columbus Avenue/935 Kearny Street are shown below. **(Figure 86)**

After World War II, many hotels in North Beach including all previously called lodging houses came to be called residential hotels and later single-room occupancy hotels (SROs).

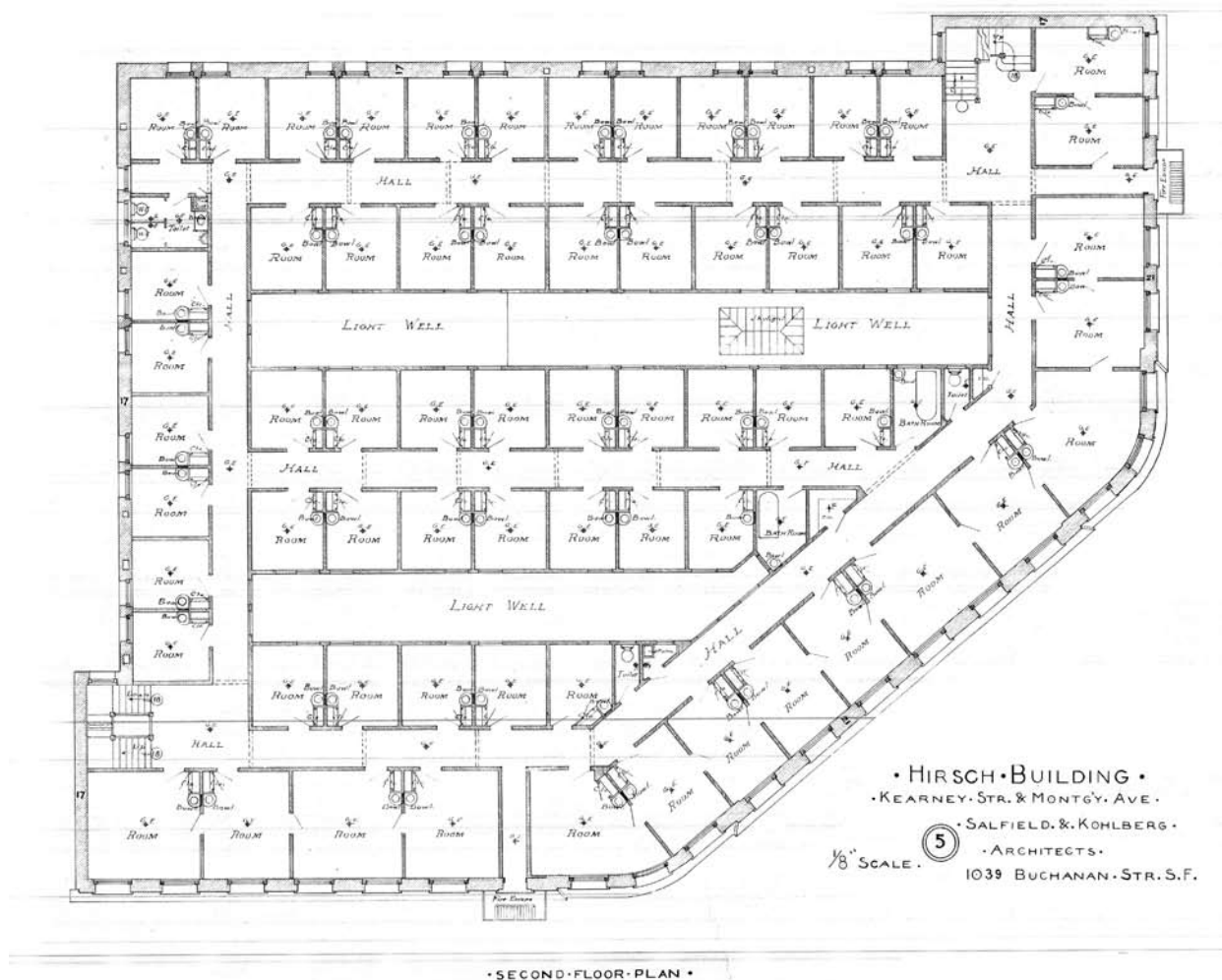


FIGURE 86. Plans for hotel building, 145 Columbus Ave./935 Kearny St.
Original blueprints by Salfeld and Kohlberg, 1906.
Courtesy of the Northeast San Francisco Conservancy, Telegraph Hill Dwellers Archive.

COMMERCIAL

Because most businesses in North Beach are on the ground floors of larger buildings built for a mix of uses, there is little strictly commercial architecture in the neighborhood. An example of a building constructed for commercial and office use is the Drexler-Columbo Building at 1-21 Columbus Avenue/612-20 Washington Street with stores on the ground floor and offices above. **(Figure 87)** For a photo see Figure 120. Flats, hotels, apartments, and others that incorporate commercial uses are treated here in the discussions of those building types.

However, there is a characteristic commercial building type that may exist elsewhere within the 1906 fire zone as well — the one-story store or shop that may have been expected to be temporary when it was built. There are a few of these on the upper blocks of Columbus Avenue and a few scattered elsewhere in the district, including 716-22 Columbus Avenue, 2125 Powell Street, 1337-39 Grant Avenue (see Figure 126), and 309-29 Columbus Avenue (see Figure 127). Some of these were built with assistance from the San Francisco Relief Fund from 1906 to 1908.

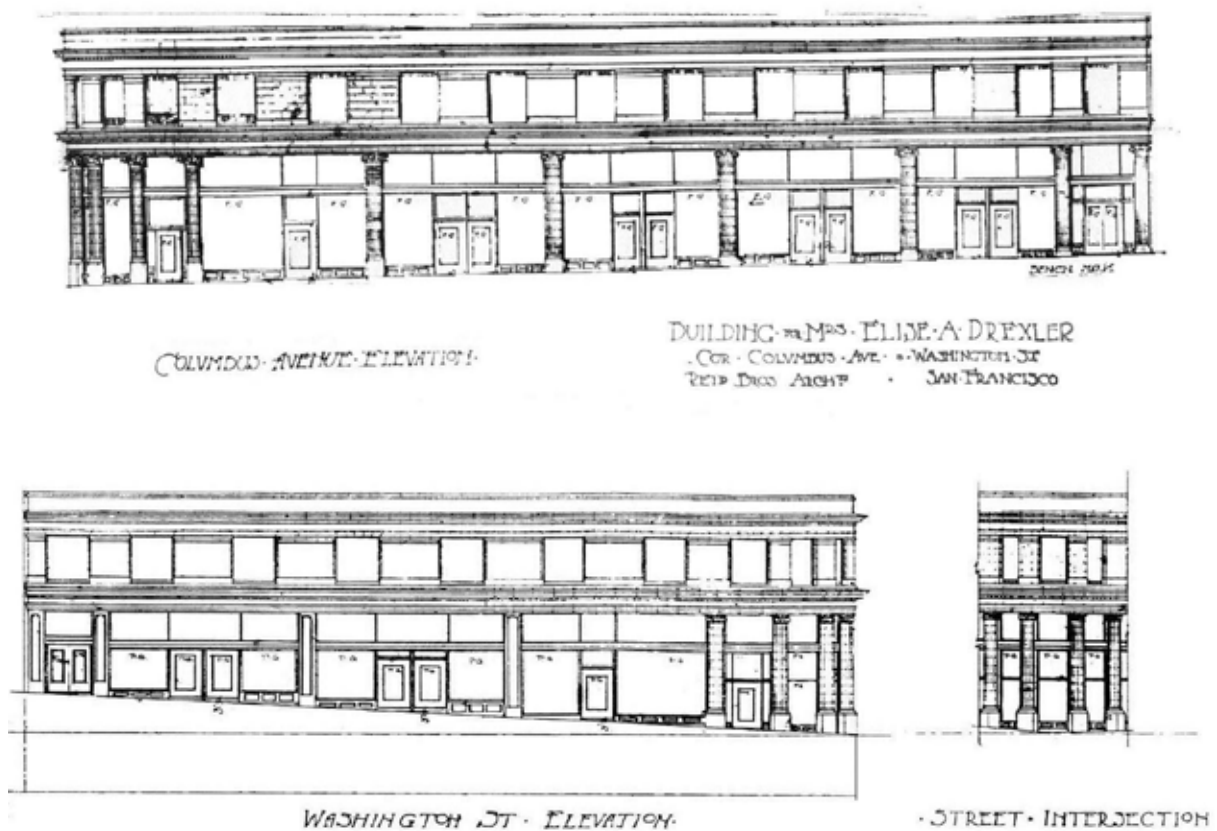


FIGURE 87. (1 of 2). Plans for a commercial building. Building for Mrs. Elise A. Drexler
The Drexler/Columbo Building,
1-21 Columbus Ave. and 612-20 Washington St. (S. F. Landmark #No. 37).
Original blueprints by Reid Brothers, Architects, 1913.
Courtesy of the Northeast San Francisco Conservancy, Telegraph Hill Dwellers Archive.

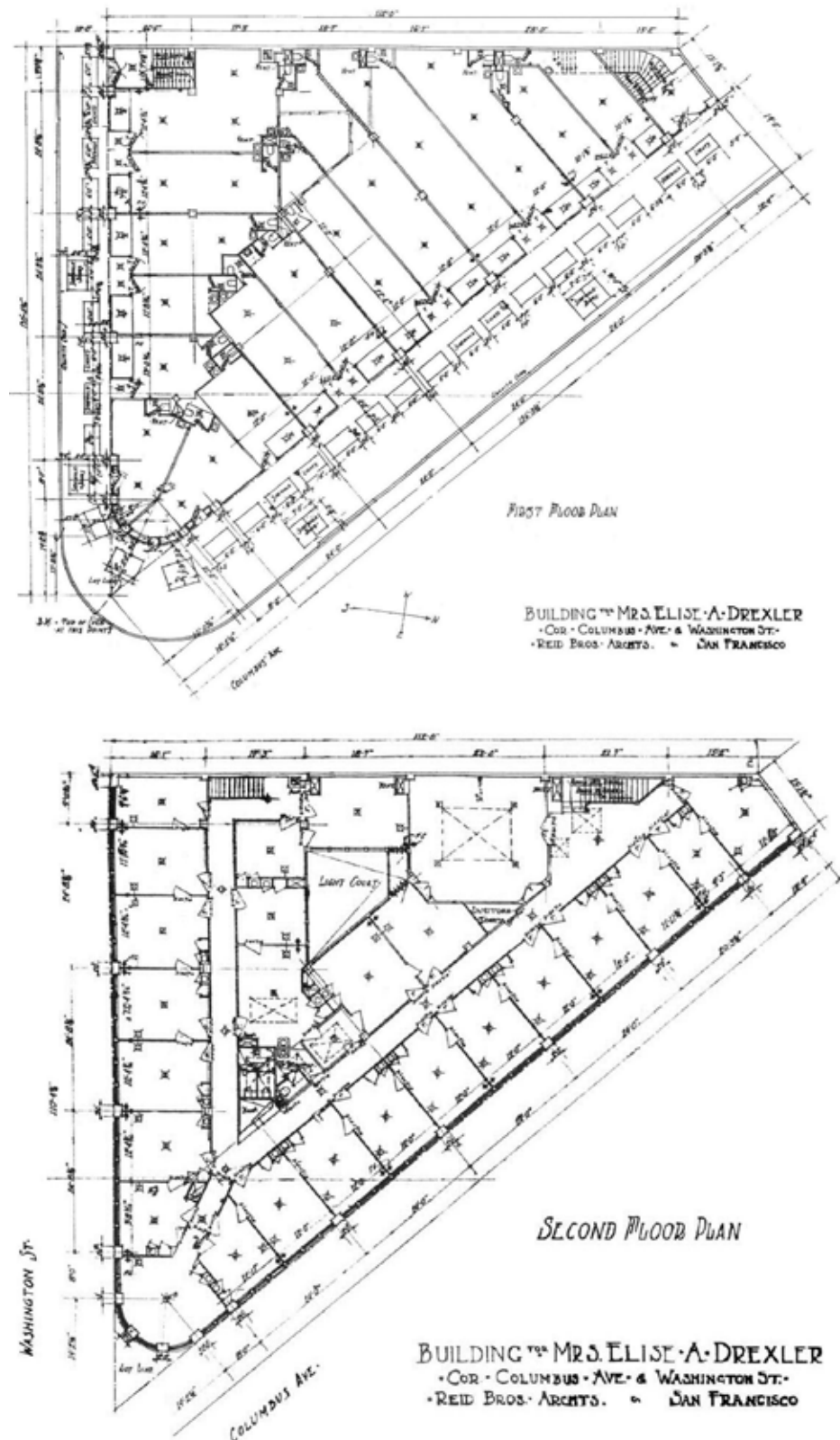


FIGURE 87 (2 of 2). Plans for a commercial building. Building for Mrs. Elise A. Drexler
The Drexler/Columbo Building, 1-21 Columbus Ave. and 612-20 Washington St. (S. F. Landmark No. 237).
Original blueprints by Reid Brothers, Architects, 1913.
Courtesy of the Northeast San Francisco Conservancy, Telegraph Hill Dwellers Archive.

INSTITUTIONS

Schools

The history of schools in North Beach can be broken into four periods: the nineteenth century when numerous neighborhood schools were built to keep up with the growing population; the post earthquake and fire construction of temporary schools; the reconstruction of schools in fire proof materials; and the replacement of existing schools with new seismically safer structures since the 1970s. As demographics, politics, and theories of education changed, schools merged, separated, moved, and were rebuilt.

In addition to the many public schools, there was also one church school. Kindergartens and children's homes are treated under a separate heading in this report — "Social Life" on pages 61-62.

One of the important nineteenth-century achievements for the development of schools was the acquisition of property. As the schools have been built and rebuilt over the years, they have generally occupied sites that were purchased by the city in the 1850s and 1860s.

Among the earliest schools in San Francisco was "the Powell Street or North Beach" school, opened in November 1851. (Bancroft 1890: vol. 7, 719) Located a few blocks south of what is now considered North Beach, on Powell between Clay and Washington, this was the first to serve students in the neighborhood.

The second school in the area was the Union Grammar School, "a rough wooden building" at Montgomery Street and Broadway built in 1852. In 1853, it moved to Dupont and Broadway, and in 1854, it moved up Telegraph Hill to the north side of Union Street between Montgomery and Kearny streets into a new brick building. (Ferober 1879) It is uncertain how long the original building remained in use but, sometime after the assassination of President James A. Garfield in 1881, the school was renamed for him.

After 1906, the school was relocated in a group of one-story wood structures on this site, as shown on the 1913 Sanborn map. About 1910, Garfield School moved nearby and this site became the Ungraded Primary School (Myrick 2001: 173) until, sometime between 1918 and 1949, when it became a Golden Gate Kindergarten Association Nursery School.

Also in 1854, the Union Primary School was established in a new brick building at the northwest corner of Filbert and Kearny streets. By 1879, this was replaced by "a pleasant two-story wood building containing eight commodious rooms." (Ferober 1879) About 1910, Garfield Primary School moved to this site, replacing the Union Primary School, in a new three-story stucco clad building with a red tile hip roof. In 1981, the building was replaced by a new structure.

In the 1860s, three more schools were built in North Beach, beginning with the Colored School. First established in a wood building on Jackson Street in 1854, the Colored School moved to another wood building at 840 Broadway near Powell in 1861, and moved again in 1869 to Broadway and Taylor. The Colored School closed in 1875 when the School Board abolished separate education for black and white students. When the Colored School left the site at 840 Broadway, that site became the Broadway Grammar School. In 1879, the school was described as "a twelve-class brick building." (Ferober 1879)

In 1901, the name of the Broadway Grammar School was changed to the Jean Parker Grammar School. Jean Parker was a prominent educator in San Francisco who was active in the San Francisco Settlement Association and who had been principal of Broadway Grammar School for twenty-one years until her retirement in 1901. She was the only San Francisco teacher for whom a school was named during her lifetime. (*San Francisco Chronicle* 1894, 1901, 1911, 1922) The Jean Parker School was rebuilt after 1906

in temporary wood buildings and, before 1913, was rebuilt again as a two-story and basement, steel frame structure with brick walls. **(Figure 88)**



FIGURE 88. Jean Parker School, 840 Broadway. (constructed before 1913, demolished in 1997)
J. B. Monaco (jbmonaco.com, Telegraph Hill and North Beach Photo Gallery, image 13 of 91).

Damaged in the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, the original brick building was replaced in 1997 with a new structure, incorporating a few details from the original school building, including archways and columns.

The Broadway Primary School was opened in 1866 in a brick building at Broadway and Powell streets. In 1871, it moved to 350 Broadway between Sansome and Montgomery streets. In 1879, the Broadway Primary School occupied a two-story wood building described as having “eight pleasant classrooms.” (Feroben 1879) Thus, at one time adjacent to the Broadway Grammar School, the Broadway Primary School moved five blocks east, remaining on the north side of Broadway.

After 1906, the Broadway Primary School was rebuilt as the Washington Irving Public School in a complex of one- and two-story wood buildings. These were replaced in 1914 with a three-story steel frame structure with brick walls. The name of the school has been changed to the John Yehall Chin School. **(Figure 89)**

In addition to these schools, others nearby have served portions of the North Beach neighborhood, including the following primary and grammar schools: Washington Grammar School at Washington and Mason streets; the North Cosmopolitan School for French, German, and Spanish on Filbert near Jones Street; the



FIGURE 89. John Yehall Chin Elementary School
(Originally Washington Irving Public School), 350 Broadway (constructed in 1914).
Photo: Waymarking.com

Denman Grammar School at Bush and Taylor; and the Greenwich Primary School on Greenwich between Jones and Leavenworth. Beginning in the 1860s, North Beach children could also attend the high school for boys at Clay and Powell and the high school for girls at Bush and Stockton. After many years trying to get a neighborhood high school, the 1921 opening of Galileo High School at 1150 Francisco, four blocks west of Columbus Avenue, was a point of pride for North Beach.

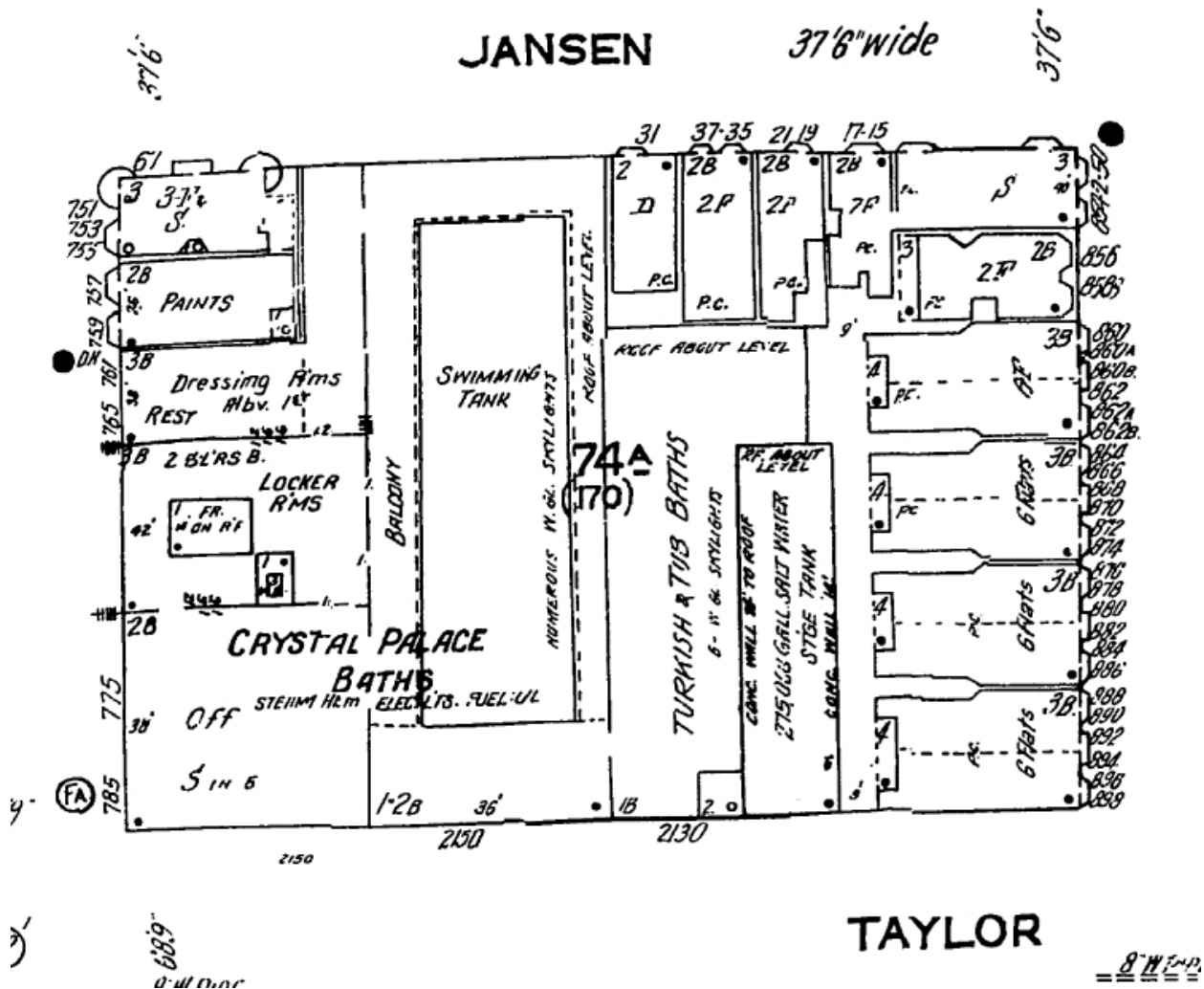
Reflecting a restructuring of the school system, Francisco Junior High School opened on newly acquired property on two sites. The main school building at 2170 Powell Street between Francisco and Chestnut was a two-story reinforced concrete building built in 1924, with a gymnasium and a cafeteria. In 1931, the Francisco Junior High School Annex was opened in a two-story and basement reinforced concrete building at 330 Francisco Street.

Apart from the public schools, the Roman Catholic church of Saints Peter and Paul operated schools for boys and girls beginning in 1925. The first was the Salesian Grammar School for Boys at the church. For a few years, primary school age children and girls attended the Presentation Convent School at Mason and Pacific streets. The schools shortly merged as the Salesian Parochial School, and a high school was added in 1928. (Baccari 1985: 91, 107)

Baths

Public baths were common in San Francisco in the nineteenth century when many people lived in flop houses and cheap lodging houses with inadequate or no bathing facilities. In the early twentieth century baths catered to residents of lodging houses and boarding houses where hot water may have only been provided once a week. (Groth 1994: 115) A bathhouse may also have been cheaper than the extra cost of a bath in a hotel.

North Beach was served by at least one bathhouse, the Crystal Palace Baths, which was first located at Vallejo and Stockton streets by 1891. (Bloomfield 1982: 92) Sometime after 1913 they were re-established at the southeast corner of Taylor and Lombard streets. In 1949 they still occupied over half of the block bound by Taylor, Lombard, Jansen, and Greenwich streets. At that time the facility included locker rooms, dressing rooms, a large swimming tank with a balcony, "Turkish Tub & Baths," and a 275,000 gallon salt water storage tank. (*San Francisco Chronicle* 11 February 1909; Sanborn Map Company 1913, 1949) Both locations had salt water piped from an intake at Ocean Beach by the Olympic Salt Water Company. (Figure 90)



Churches

The first church in North Beach was St. Francis of Assisi, a Roman Catholic church established on its current site on Vallejo Street between Columbus and Grant in 1849. Construction on the building that is still standing began in 1859. The building was severely damaged in 1906 but rebuilt in 1913. **(Figure 91)**



FIGURE 91. St. Francis of Assisi, 610 Vallejo St., 1849.
(Landmark No. 5).

San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library
(AAB-0874).

Two early churches in the area were for black congregations. The Bethel A.M.E. Church, the first black congregation in the city, was established at Powell and John streets, a block and a half south of Broadway in February 1852. The First Colored Baptist Church began meeting on Kearny Street in August 1852. In 1854, the congregation “bought the old First Baptist Church and moved it to a location on Dupont Street (now Grant Avenue) between Greenwich and Filbert streets.” (Third Baptist Church) In 1868, the congregation moved out of the neighborhood.

After occupying temporary quarters for three years, one of the earliest Jewish congregations in San Francisco, Sherith Israel, built its first synagogue on Stockton Street between Broadway and Vallejo in 1854, where they remained until they moved to Post and Taylor streets in 1870.

According to Hubert Howe Bancroft, in the 1850s-1860s Stockton Street from Washington Street to Washington Square “was the chief

promenade, near the adjoining churches.” (Bancroft 1888: vol. 6, 778) The German Methodist Episcopal church was on the north side of Broadway between Stockton Street and Powell Street; it was established in 1859, became the St. Paul German Methodist Church in 1879, and moved to Folsom Street after its destruction in 1906. The Second Congregational Church on the north side of Greenwich Street above Stockton Street was established in 1853 and changed to the German Evangelical Lutheran Church in 1862. After the earthquake, this was St. Andreas German Evangelical Lutheran Church at 756 Union Street; by 1946 it was the Italian Methodist Episcopal Church of St. John. The Fourth Congregational Church was established in 1865 at 613 Green Street, corner of Stockton Street. (Myrick 2001: 149, 173, 197) The Fourth Congregational Church came to be known as the Green Street Congregational Church; it was rebuilt at 631 Green Street after 1906, as shown on the 1913 Sanborn map. It was closed in 1917 and in 1924 was converted to a theater — the Teatro Allesandro Eden.

A Russian Orthodox Church was established in San Francisco in 1868 at 504 Greenwich Street. This church, under changing names, moved three times before it returned to North Beach in 1888. In that year a new structure was built on Powell Street across from Washington Square at the site later occupied by the Pagoda Theater. The new building burned down in 1889 and was rebuilt as Holy Trinity Church. After it was destroyed again in 1906, the church moved to Green Street and Van Ness Avenue. (Myrick 2001: 143)

St. Peter’s Episcopal Church was located at the southwest corner of Stockton Street and Filbert Street in

1871. After it was destroyed in 1906, the congregation built a temporary structure on Jones Street between Greenwich Street and Lombard Street. In 1913, they moved to 29th Avenue near Clement Street. (Sanborn Map Company 1899-1913, *San Francisco Examiner*, 21 October 1906)

Our Lady of Guadalupe Roman Catholic Church, 906 Broadway at Mason Street, was established in 1875 for Spanish speakers and Italians. The church that was completed in 1880 was destroyed in 1906. A temporary structure was built on the same site by October 1906. This was followed by a new building on the site in 1911 and completed in 1912 (See Figure 51). (*San Francisco Chronicle* 1880, 1911, and 1912) Saints Peter and Paul Roman Catholic Church was established in 1884 at the northeast corner of Grant Avenue and Filbert Street on a site previously occupied by the Third Baptist Church. After the building was destroyed in 1906, a new temporary wood church structure was completed in October 1906 on the same site. In 1908, a new site was purchased down the hill on Filbert Street facing Washington Square. When the crypt for a building at the new site was completed in 1914, services were held there while work continued on the main church space above. Work stopped during World War I and resumed in 1922. The new church was dedicated in 1924 (see Figures 36 and 136).

Parks and Playgrounds: Public Open Space

For its size and density, North Beach has little parkland or open space. Mapped as one of the original three public squares in the Jasper O'Farrell Survey of 1847, Washington Square, on the block bounded by Powell and Stockton, Union and Filbert streets, has served as the neighborhood center of North Beach for over 170 years. Of the three original public squares shown in the 1847 survey, only Washington Square remains in its original natural service. When Montgomery Avenue was cut through the southwest corner of the square in 1873, a portion was lost to the street right-of-way and a small triangle bound by Montgomery, Powell, and Union streets, later called Marini Plaza, was separated from the main square. As stated in the *Draft Landmark Designation Case Report for Washington Square* (Landmark No. 226), dated April 1999, prepared by Kate Nichol for the San Francisco Planning Department:

Washington Square is one of San Francisco's oldest and most beloved parks. Dedicated as public open space even before the incorporation of the city of San Francisco, it remained a tranquil, natural oasis as the City spang up around it. In pre-Gold Rush California, Juana Briones, one of California's noteworthy pioneers, grew vegetables on this land. In 1847, when Jasper O'Farrell was commissioned to lay out the city's streets, he identified three city blocks as public squares, including the city block which later became known as Washington Square. In 1849, William Eddy re-surveyed the City and published a widely distributed map showing the public squares. In 1850, the sites were set aside for the public by John W. Geary.

Washington Square is associated with important events in local and state history. The Park was given its name during the fervently patriotic years leading up to the Civil War and was the site of Fourth of July ceremonies. In 1906-7, 600 earthquake refugees were sheltered in the park. As a public park, Washington Square had hosted many special events such as Fourth of July and Columbus Day celebrations, the start of the annual Blessing of the Fishing Fleet procession, and the North Beach Festival. (Nichol 1999: 1)

The Landmark Designation for the square also includes the following public art and objects: the granite block placed in 1869 as a U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey Station; the Volunteer Fire Department Statue erected in 1935 by bequest of Lillie Hitchcock Coit; the Benjamin Franklin Statue (1879), originally a water fountain commissioned by temperance activist Henry Cogswell; the "Thirst" statue (1905); the Marini bust (1949); the Bird Bath (1976); and the state historical marker to honor Juana Briones (1997).

In 1903 the voters approved bonds for the purchase of the North Beach Playground in the block bound by Greenwich, Lombard, Mason, and Powell streets, with its southwest corner cut off by Montgomery Avenue. In 1908-1909, the playground was improved with grading and retaining walls, one fresh water pool and one salt water pool, “several baseball diamonds, a handball court, a basket-ball plat, and various other places for outdoor sports” in addition to “dressing rooms, shower baths, etc.” (*San Francisco Chronicle* 11 February 1909, p. 4) (**Figure 92**) After World War II, the playground was rebuilt with a new swimming pool in 1956 and a library designed by Appleton and Wolford in 1958. The pool and clubhouse were renovated in 2006. The library was demolished and a new library was built as a part of the playground redesign in 2014.

Although not within the North Beach survey area, the top of Telegraph Hill was purchased by the City for Pioneer Park by the City in 1876. Pioneer Park was expanded in 1903.



FIGURE 92. North Beach Playground, ca. 1909.
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library,
Department of Public Works, Album 13, #2551.

MODERN ARCHITECTURE

In the mid 1930s, a few buildings with strikingly different appearances were first built in and around North Beach, mostly on Telegraph Hill and in the northern part of the neighborhood. Some of these were designed by a new generation of university-trained architects who were influenced by European modernism. Some were designed by the same architects already practicing in the neighborhood and by others trained in traditional ways that generally did not involve university education. The same building types — dwellings, flats, apartment, and commercial buildings — were designed with flat roofs, an absence of historical detail, an orientation to the site and views, and often with stained rather than painted wood. Among well-known San Francisco architects represented in these buildings were Gardner Dailey, who designed 325-29 Lombard Street (1937) (**Figure 93**), 275 Telegraph Hill Boulevard (1940), 281 Telegraph Hill Boulevard (1936), and 285 Telegraph Hill Boulevard (1935); Miller and Pflueger, who designed Bimbo’s 365 Club at 1025 Columbus Avenue (1930 and 1934); William W. Wurster, who designed 22 Aladdin Terrace (1939); Henry Temple Howard, who designed 521-23 Francisco Street/30 Water Street (1939) as a studio for noted

artists Robert Boardman Howard and Adaline Kent; Hertzka & Knowles, who designed 386-88 and 392-94 Chestnut Street (1940) (**Figure 94**) and 580 Green Street (1961); and Herman C. Baumann, who designed 11 buildings in North Beach between 1936-41, including those at 16-18/22-24 Stockton Street (1940) (**Figure 95**), 2110-12 Stockton Street (1941), and 294-96 Francisco Street (1941).



FIGURE 93. 325-29 Lombard St. (constructed in 1937).
Mid-Century Modern.
Architect: Gardner Dailey.
Perspective view (left), Entry (right).
Photos by Judith Powell.

This development continued after the war in greater numbers from the late 1940s to the 1970s, diminishing in the 1980s. Among well-known architects represented in this period were Martin Rist, who designed 470 Columbus Avenue (1936) (**Figure 96**) and the Buon Gusto Sausage Factory at 535 Green Street (1946); Lloyd Conrich, who designed 3 apartment buildings at 359 Green Street (1963), 361-63 Green Street (1953), and the 30-unit apartment complex at 566 Vallejo Street (1955); John S. Bolles, who designed 460 Filbert Street (1957); Lawrence Halprin and Douglas Baylis, who redesigned Washington Square Park in 1957; Harold K. Major, who designed 1050 Columbus Avenue (1961), 1821 and 1831 Grant Avenue (1964), and 570 Union Street (1965); Thomas Hsieh, who designed the Salvation Army Building at 1450 Powell Street (1971); Donald McDonald, who designed the 16-unit apartment building at 460 Francisco Street (1979); Appleton & Wolfard, who designed the former North Beach Library at 800 Columbus Avenue/2020 Mason Street (1958), listed on the National Register of Historic Places and demolished in 2014; Peter D. Canali, who designed the Rossi Market building at 627 Vallejo Street (1932) (**Figure 97**); and Esherick, Homsey, Dodge, and Davis who designed the Garfield School at 420 Filbert Street (c. 1981).

For an in-depth exploration of Modern architecture and the biographies of most of the above listed architects, please see the *San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design 1935 - 1970 Historic Context Statement* (Modern Context Statement), on file with the San Francisco Planning Department. The Modern Context Statement identifies character-defining features of Modern architectural and landscape design

and documents significance, criteria considerations and integrity thresholds. See Appendix C: Modern Architects In North Beach for a table of Modern buildings in North Beach designed by architects identified in the Modern Context Statement.

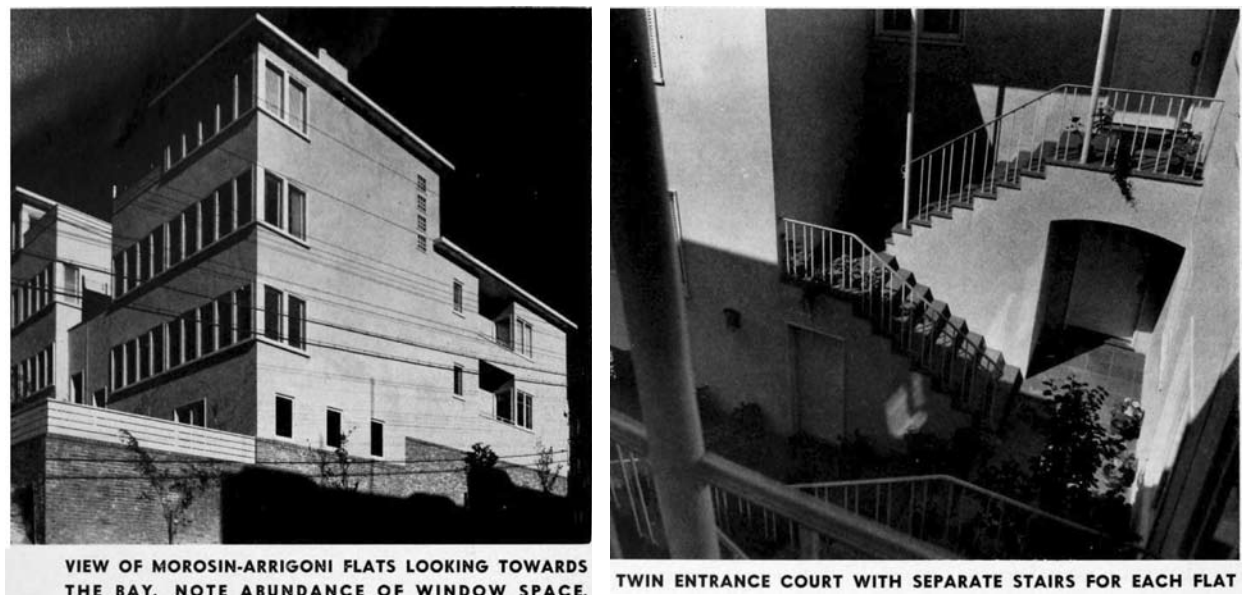


FIGURE 94. Arrigoni-Morosin Flats, 386-88 and 392-94 Chestnut St. (constructed in 1940).

Architect: Hertzka & Knowles.

Photo from *Architect and Engineer*, July 1941, p. 18, from internet archive.



FIGURE 95. 1916-18 Stockton St. and 1922-24 Stockton St. (constructed in 1940).

Architect: Herman C. Baumann. Photo: Google Street View.



FIGURE 96. 470 Columbus Ave. (constructed in 1936)
Streamlined Moderne. Architect: Martin Rist.
Photo by Nancy Shanahan.



FIGURE 97. Rossi's Market, 1955. 627 Vallejo St., (constructed 1932)
Streamlined Moderne. Architect: Peter D. Canali.
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library (AAC-6988)

VI. PROPERTY AND RESOURCE TYPES

A context statement identifies property types that are associated with the principal themes in the history and development of a district or a geographical area. The identification of property types and their linkage with events, patterns of development, important individuals or architectural values is intended to provide guidance in developing methods for the historical survey of a defined area. Property type identification helps to focus identification and evaluation on individual buildings, sites, landscapes, and districts that may be significant or contribute to the significance of an area.

RESIDENTIAL AND MIXED USE BUILDINGS

Except for a relatively small number of buildings on the south side of Broadway and on Columbus Avenue located within the fire limits where fireproof construction was required (see Figure 20 for map), virtually all residential and mixed-use buildings in North Beach are of wood construction. The most common characteristics are as follows:

- The buildings are usually 18-45 feet wide and three stories tall, but may be two or four stories tall. The roofline is a parapet or false front, articulated as a cornice.
- There is no front yard, setback, or side yard.
- Most often the buildings have one or two projecting stacks of bay windows, which usually begin one level above the street and sometimes continue up through the cornice. Bay window floor plans may be angled, rectangular, or circular, and the central facet is usually wider than the angled sides.
- The site very often slopes from one side of the building to the other, sometimes quite steeply. A basement wall of concrete faced to imitate rock-cut stones usually compensates for such differences in level.
- The upper part of the building is faced with horizontal wood siding, of smooth tongue-and-groove pattern or of rustic in channel, 'V', or alternating wide and narrow pattern, or sometimes of narrow-appearing, overlapping clapboards.
- A recessed entry on one side or in the center of the façade contains steps leading to the door(s) in a paneled vestibule. The façade may contain a storefront, or paired or Palladian windows, or a garage (added or original).
- They are treated with facade ornamentation derived from Renaissance and Baroque architecture, including cornices, belt courses, pilaster and column orders, window and door moldings, and other details. They may be elaborate with modillions, egg-and-dart and dentil moldings, consoles, pediments, keystones, oval windows, columns, and art glass, or as simple as a pair of Classical Revival moldings for the cornice, or anywhere in between. Where openings are not ornamented, they are finished with plain wide boards. A few buildings show an imaginative use of large-scaled, out-of-context Classical or novelty ornamental details made of wood, for instance guttae from the Doric Order, or pieces in the shapes of rings or ribbons.

The types of these wood frame residential buildings, described below in order of frequency, conform to the above description except as noted.

Flats

Flats are the most numerous buildings from the reconstruction period (period of significance 1906 to 1915) in North Beach. Although a few stand out individually, collectively they are extremely important to the district. While all types are significant, flats might be said to be first among equals.

Under the building laws, as discussed on page 95, flats are residential buildings with self-contained living units (they include kitchens and bathrooms) in which each unit has its own outside door.

Each of the following types of flats buildings was built during the reconstruction period (period of significance 1906 to 1915) or during the subsequent period of expansion and infill (period of significance 1916 to 1941).

For a detailed discussion of the history and characteristics of flats in North Beach, see pages 95-99.

Type I. Standard Flats

Most flats are two- or three-story buildings on rectangular city lots (of varying dimensions), with living units stacked on top of each other. **(Figures 98 and 99)** See Figure 79 for plans for the 3 floor/3 flat building at 1934-38 Mason Street. On the commercial streets like Broadway, Columbus Avenue and Grant Avenue, and much of Stockton Street and Green Street, building use is usually mixed, with ground floor stores below residential units. **(Figure 100)**

The outside doors in standard flats buildings are usually in an open-air recessed entry vestibule and sometimes in the front wall of the buildings. Upper level flats are reached through the outside doors and up private interior stairways. The entry vestibules are frequently up a flight of stairs from the sidewalk.

Flats are built to the front and sides of the property with the size of light courts at the sides and rear yards increasing with successive Tenement House laws.

Flats on main streets usually have bay windows above the ground level, either in a symmetrical composition of two parallel stacks or in an asymmetrical composition stacked on one side. **(Figure 101)** Bay windows are usually angled or curved.



FIGURE 98. Type I Standard Flats.
1934-38 Mason St. (constructed in 1907)
Photo: Google Street View.



FIGURE 99. Type 1. Standard Flats.
537-47 Filbert St. (constructed in 1912). Photo by Judith Powell.



FIGURE 100. Type 1. Standard Flats.
538-40 Green St. (constructed in 1913)
Photo by J. G. Corbett



FIGURE 101. Type 1. Standard Flats.
577-81 Filbert St. (constructed in 1906)
Photo by J. G. Corbett.

Type II. Cuneo Flats

A few flats buildings were built in one-story arrangements with units side-by-side. The best-known and largest example and the source of the name, “Cuneo Flats”, is the much derided building at Bay and Leavenworth Streets (demolished). It was built by the Cuneo and Costa Company in stacks of horizontal rows of flats with an open-air galley on each floor (see Figure 82). This is a rare type, and only a few may remain. Several have been identified at 12-22 Edith Street, constructed in 1907 by William J. and Louis Cuneo, contractors, and 1154-1174 Kearny Street, built in 1909 by C.N.P. Ahlgren Company. This type was also built by companies and individuals who had no connection to the Cuneos. Further research may identify others.

Type III. Flatiron Mixed Use Buildings

These flats occur where Columbus Avenue cuts through the rectangular street grid to create triangular lots. By location on the commercial street, they always have shops at ground level and residential units above. Usually they are at the more elaborate end of the ornamentation scale, often with circular bay windows at the acute angled corners. **(Figure 102)** Except as noted, this subtype conforms to the general description of flats above.



FIGURE 102. Type III. Flatiron Mixed Use Building.
701-09 Columbus Ave. (constructed in 1906)
Photo by Dennis Hearne.

Type IV. Romeo Flats

Romeo flats, so called because of the open-air balcony on each floor, are large flats buildings, whose history is related to both flats and apartment buildings. Romeo flats are multi-unit residential buildings built following the building and tenement house laws as flats in order to avoid the more restrictive rules for apartment buildings. For an extensive discussion of the relationship between tenements and Romeo flats, see pages 100-107.

A typical Romeo flats building is a six-flat structure with two parallel stacks of three flats on either side of an open-air staircase. **(Figure 103 and 104)** The required outside doors in a Romeo flats building open on the staircase, in comparison to a standard flats building where all doors open on the same vestibule with private interior stairs leading directly from the vestibule to upper floors.

A variation on the type is the enclosed Romeo flats, where the central staircase and balcony on each floor is protected from the elements by an exterior wall. This staircase wall is typically lit by windows at the landings which are between the floor levels. Thus, in Romeo Flats, the windows at landings are between the levels of the windows of the flats themselves. These buildings have two to four flats per floor. **(Figures 105 and 106)** See Figure 83 for plans of a typical enclosed Romeo flats building. While these buildings may look more like apartment buildings, they are flats under the building laws, and therefore, the earliest examples occupy a higher proportion of the site than apartment buildings.

In the period from 1906 to 1913, a series of increasingly restrictive building and tenement house laws resulted in Romeo flats buildings with larger light courts and rear yards.

Except as noted, this subtype conforms to the general description of flats above.

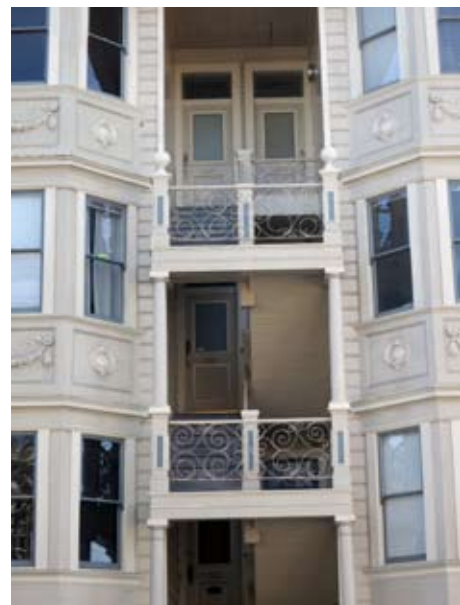


FIGURE 103. Type IV. Romeo flats.
333-43 Chestnut St. (constructed in 1907).
Facade (left), stairway detail (above)
Photos by Judith Powell.



FIGURE 104. Type IV. Romeo flats.
477-81 Greenwich St. (constructed in 1907)
Photo by Judith Powell.



FIGURE 105. Type IV. Romeo flats (enclosed)
2055-59 Powell St. (constructed in 1908)
Photo by Dennis Hearne.



FIGURE 106. Type IV. Romeo flats (enclosed)
471-77 Vallejo St. (constructed in 1907)
Photo: Google Street View



Type V. Alley Flats

Flats on alleys have flat facades and no bay windows and are usually on narrow, shallow lots. Height may be one, two, or three stories. These have simpler ornamentation than flats on main streets. Frequently the entry recess is shallow and the ornamentation limited to paneling in the vestibule and a cornice decorated only with simple rectangular boards for consoles. In place of a bay it may have a pair of windows side by side. This subtype also occurs at the rears of lots, behind other buildings. Otherwise this subtype conforms to the general description of flats and Romeo Flats above. **(Figures 107 and 108)**

FIGURE 107. Type V. Alley Flats (Romeo).
40-44 Via Ferlinghetti. (constructed in 1907)
Photo by Dennis Hearne.



FIGURE 108. Type V.
Alley Flats. Varennes St.
north of Green Street.
Photo by Dennis Hearne

Type VI. Flats Incorporating a Garage

Beginning in the 1920s, during the period of expansion and infill (period of significance 1916 to 1941), many flats were built that were similar in most ways to Type I Standard Flats, except that they incorporated a garage. Siding of the facade is brick veneer or stucco, often with brick veneer on the ground floor. Their ornamentation represents later styles. Ceramic tile is often found on the parapet and/or the door hood. Moldings may include rope moldings, turned colonnettes, rows of tiny arches, and other Spanish-inspired motifs. Sometimes a few select colored ceramic tiles are set into the façade. **(Figures 109, 110 and 111)** See also Figure A6. With the above exceptions, this subtype conforms to the general description of flats above.



FIGURE 109. Type VI. Flats Incorporating Garage.
1725-27 Lombard St. (constructed in 1922)
Photo: Google Street View



FIGURE 110. Type VI. Flats Incorporating Garage.
220-22 Francisco St. (constructed in 1940)
Photo by Dennis Hearne.



FIGURE 111. Type VI. Flats Incorporating Garage.
Detail of 602-10 Lombard St.
(constructed in 1926) Photo by Dennis Hearne.

Hotels

Most North Beach hotels were built in the first two years after the earthquake. These residential structures are of varying sizes, usually with stores on the ground floor. **(Figures 112 and 113)** See Figure 86 for plans of a hotel building. Hotels on the south side of Broadway and on Columbus south of Broadway are of brick or reinforced concrete construction. Elsewhere they are of wood construction. Hotels are residential buildings whose units usually share baths and lack kitchen facilities. Some hotels have dining rooms, sometimes in basements. Access to all hotel rooms, always on upper floors, is through a single ground floor entrance. For a more detailed discussion of the history of hotels in North Beach, see pages 110-111.



FIGURE 112. Hotel.
Golden Eagle Hotel.
400-06 Broadway. (constructed in 1906)
Photo by J. G. Corbett.



FIGURE 113. Hotel.
Evergreen Hotel.
301 Columbus Ave. and 604 Broadway
(constructed in 1906)
Photo by Judith Powell

Apartments

Apartments are multi-unit residential buildings that were first built under the Tenement House laws after July 1907. **(Figures 114 and 115)** An apartment building has a single outside entrance, like a hotel, which leads through a lobby or directly up a staircase to upper level living units with interior doors. Apartment units are self-contained (with kitchens and bathrooms). Many apartment buildings have ground floor stores. Because the Tenement House laws required apartment buildings to have larger light courts and rear yards than flats or Romeo flats, few apartment buildings were built right after the earthquake because of these greater restrictions. For a more detailed discussion of the history of apartments in North Beach, see pages 107-109, including a blueprint for the apartment building at 1143-47 Kearny.



FIGURE 114. Built as a tenement, later converted to apartments. 1416 Powell St. (constructed in 1906). Photo: Google Street View.

A few new apartment buildings were constructed in modernist architectural styles beginning in the mid-1930s, including the building at 439 Greenwich Street (See Figure 72.).

Except as noted, this type conforms to the general description under the heading Residential and Mixed Use Buildings above.



FIGURE 115. Apartments. 1400 Grant Ave. (constructed in 1909). Photo by John G. Corbett.

Dwellings: Cottages and Other Types

Smaller than the predominate flats buildings, one and two-story wood dwellings were built throughout North Beach after 1906. (**Figures 116, 117, and 118**) See Figures 73 and 74 for other photos of dwellings. Typically rectangular in plan with a gabled roof and modest ornamentation, the majority of these dwellings were built on alleys or the rear of lots with flats in front blocking the view from the street. The large number of dwellings in North Beach is evident on Sanborn maps (see Figure 75).

Many of these were single-family homes. Others were boarding houses or houses of prostitution. The simplest of these were referred to, inconsistently, as cottages. Many were built as Bonus or Grant-and-Loan Houses or Camp Cottages. For detailed discussions of the history of dwellings in North Beach, see “Housing Policy-Reconstruction” at pages 33-38, and “Dwellings: Cottages and Other Types” at pages 89-95.

A few dwellings were newly constructed in modernist architectural styles beginning in the mid-1930s.



FIGURE 116. Dwelling.
1448 Kearny St. (construction date unknown)
Photo: Google Street View.



FIGURE 117. Dwelling.
7 Julius St. (constructed in 1908)
Photo by Judith Powell.



FIGURE 118. Dwelling.
14 Valparaiso St.
(construction date unknown)
Photo by Dennis Hearne.

COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

Because most businesses in North Beach are on the ground floor of larger buildings built for a mix of uses, there is little strictly commercial architecture in the neighborhood. In addition to the one-story wood structures for stores built immediately following the earthquake, a number of brick and concrete buildings were constructed on Broadway and Columbus Avenue with stores below and offices, halls or other spaces above. Following the reconstruction after the earthquake, a few commercial garages and banks were built of brick or concrete on major streets. Flats, hotel, apartments, and others that incorporate commercial uses are described elsewhere in the discussion of those building types. For a discussion of the history of commerce in North Beach, see pages 66-69.

Fireproof Commercial Blocks

This building type is a small, two to four story mixed use building with a structure usually of brick, but sometimes of concrete. Most of the North Beach examples are found south of the midline of Broadway, and on Columbus Avenue south of Broadway, the northern boundary of the area where the City required “fireproof” construction after the 1906 earthquake and fire. (See “Fire Limits and Building Laws” on pages 22-27.) This type makes up most of the Jackson Square Historic District, as well as the area within our survey boundaries identified as the proposed Jackson Square Historic District Extension in the 1982 North Beach Survey. The area proposed for addition to the Jackson Square Historic District would continue the District from its present northern boundary up to the center line of Broadway, between Sansome and Kearny Streets

(see Figure 1 for boundaries). Three buildings in this area (the Old Ohio Street Houses at 17, 41-47 and 55-59 Osgood Place) are already listed on the National Register of Historic Places (**Figure 119**) and eleven were cited for architectural merit in the San Francisco Department of City Planning’s 1976 survey.



FIGURE 119. Fireproof Commercial Block Buildings. The Old Ohio Street Houses (constructed in 1906-1907). Facing south towards Pacific Ave. Photos: noehill.com.

These commercial buildings are usually 20 to 50 feet wide. The typical example occupies the entire front of its lot without setback or side yards. Upper floors were designed for offices, halls, hotels, or other residential uses. Ground floors were designed for shops or stores and usually have large areas of plate glass display windows, a base, a strip of clerestory windows, and, originally, invitingly angled store entrance vestibules. (For a detailed discussion of storefronts, see page 140-141.) The facades were designed in two parts, an unchanging upper part and a ground floor designed to accommodate the expected frequent changes in commercial tenants. The upper part of the façade has more solid wall than glazing. Its windows are set in deep reveals and often have radiating lintels, sometimes with relieving arches. The roof is behind a parapet usually decorated with a Vernacular Classical Revival cornice, which is usually of pressed metal or corbeled bricks. While the brick walls of the upper parts could not easily be altered, the glass storefronts at the ground floors could be easily altered.

While the structure and sides of these buildings are usually of common brick in American bond (every sixth or seventh course is headers instead of stretchers), the façade wythe of brick may be finer. The brick may be pressed and therefore smoother, it may be of a custom color, or glazed, or the irregular clinker brick, or (in later buildings) combed or otherwise textured. Sometimes ornamentation is executed in custom shapes of bricks: moldings, paneling, roundels, etc. Sometimes the façade brick was originally stuccoed or painted.

Few buildings were constructed exclusively for commercial use. Examples include the reinforced concrete Drexler-Colombo Building at 1-12 Columbus Avenue (Landmark No. 237) (**Figure 120**), the Bank of America building at 1455 Stockton Street (**Figure 121**), the stuccoed brick building now occupied by City Lights Bookstore at 261-271 Columbus Avenue (Landmark No. 228) (**Figure 122**), the Rossi Market building at 627 Vallejo Street (see Figure 97), and the reinforced concrete Italian American Bank Building at 270 Columbus Avenue (see Figure A47).



FIGURE 120. Reinforced Concrete Commercial Building.
1-21 Columbus Ave./612-20 Washington St. (constructed in 1913).
The Drexler/Colombo Building (Landmark No. 237). Photo by Dennis Hearne.



FIGURE 121. Reinforced Concrete Commercial Building. 1455 Stockton St. (constructed in 1928).
Bank of Italy (became Bank of America in 1930). Decorative detail (right). Photos by Judith Powell.

A few examples of the numerous brick commercial mixed use buildings include: 527-529 Broadway/12 Adler Place, the Hotel Vendome at 222 Columbus Avenue/1007 Kearny Street, 501-05 Broadway and 515-21 Broadway (**Figure 123**), 381-89 Broadway, and the Orsi Building at 57-67 Columbus Avenue (**Figure 124**).



FIGURE 122. Stuccoed Brick Commercial Building.
261-71 Columbus Ave. (constructed in 1907)
City Lights Bookstore (Landmark No. 228) Photo by noehill.com



FIGURE 123. Brick Commercial Buildings.
Left: 501-05 Broadway (constructed in 1909). .
Right: 515-21 Broadway (constructed 1908). Photo by Dennis Hearne



FIGURE 124. Brick Commercial Building, 57-67 Columbus Ave. (Orsi Building) (constructed in 1906). Photo by Google Streetview



FIGURE 125. Remodeled Brick Building, 447-61 Broadway (constructed in 1907). Photo by John. G. Corbett.

Examples also exist of brick buildings later stuccoed, painted or remodeled in the Art Deco or Moderne style in the 1930s. These remodels are now more than 50 years old and may be considered potential historic resources. **(Figure 125)** See “Investment and Remodeling: The 1939 Golden Gate International Exposition” at page 48, and page 87.

A few commercial buildings were newly constructed in the Modern architectural style beginning in the mid-1930s, including the Streamline Moderne building at 470 Columbus Avenue constructed in 1937 (see Figure 96), and the Rossi Market building at 627 Vallejo Street (see Figure 97). See discussion of Modern Architecture on pages 120-23, and Appendix C: Modern Architects in North Beach.

One-Story Frame Stores

Right after the earthquake, a number of one-story wood structures were built for stores, probably with the idea that they would be replaced with large buildings. Some stores were built with assistance from the San Francisco Relief Fund from 1906-1908. A few one-story frame stores were built in the years following the earthquake and fire. Those that survive are on Columbus Avenue and scattered elsewhere and are potential historic resources. Examples include 716-22 Columbus Avenue, 2125 Powell Street, 1337-39 Grant Avenue (**Figure 126**), and 309-29 Columbus Avenue (**Figure 127**).



FIGURE 126. One Story Frame Store.
1337-39 Grant Ave. (constructed in 1912)
Photo by Judith Powell.



FIGURE 127. One Story Frame Store. 309-29 Columbus Ave. (constructed in 1906).
Photo by Judith Powell.

Storefronts

The San Francisco Planning Department's *Neighborhood Commercial Buildings, 1865-1965, Historic Context Statement* (Storefront Context Statement) identifies essential historic designs, materials finishes, and other character defining features.

Storefronts in North Beach share a similar stylistic line, whether they occur in one story wood frame buildings exclusively composed of stores, in the brick commercial blocks, or under the bay-fronted vernacular Classic frame flats. People expected storefronts to be brought up to date every so often, and therefore most North Beach buildings were designed with a coherent, unified and stylish upper section that remains intact, and a contrasting ground floor for shops. Surviving elements of the original post-earthquake era storefronts in North Beach include brick or wooden bulkheads with moldings, simple pilasters or posts between stores, angled store entrance vestibules, plate glass windows often held in place by copper or other metal strips with a Greek key decoration, and a short, vertically divided transom or clerestory window strip above the display window. Often there's a recess to hold a rolled awning.

Although found throughout the commercial areas of North Beach, a concentration of surviving elements can be found on Grant Avenue between Columbus Avenue and Filbert Street within the Upper Grant Avenue District. Another concentration was identified in the North Beach Survey is the Powell Street Shop District on the west side of the 1800 block of Powell Street. In pervasive remodeling of the 1930s, most the bulkheads or bases North Beach shops were clad in 3x3-inch or 4x4-inch glazed ceramic tiles, usually in two colors arranged checkerboard fashion or with one as the trim, often with a row or two in a zigzag pattern. The corner storefront at 1700-04 Stockton Street is particularly significant in that retains its original display windows and clerestory with glazed ceramic tile base. **(Figures 128, 129, 130, and 131)** Other remodels have changed the sizes and framing of windows, covered or removed the transom or clerestory strip, or otherwise altered the bulkheads or bases.



FIGURE 128. Storefronts. Grant Ave. between Green St. and Filbert St.
Photo by Dennis Hearne.



FIGURE 129. Corner storefront, showing original display windows, clerestory and glazed ceramic tile base.
1700-04 Stockton Street (constructed in 1915).
Photo by Judith Powell.



FIGURE 130. Glazed ceramic tile on base of building
at 2064 Powell St. Photos by Judith Powell.



FIGURE 131. Glazed ceramic tile on base of building
at 703 Columbus Ave. Photo by Judith Powell.

Garages

During the period of expansion and infill (period of significance 1916 to 1941), garages for parking, service and repair were built in scattered locations throughout North Beach as a result of the increasing use of automobiles. A few commercial garages were built of brick or reinforced concrete on major streets. These include the garage at 501 Filbert Street constructed in 1925 (**Figure 132**), the garages at 1625 Powell Street constructed in 1948 and 1636 Powell Street constructed in 1916 (**Figure 133**), and the former North Beach Garage at 735-63 Vallejo constructed in 1920, demolished in 1998 by the City for a new garage. In addition, the former stable at 721 Filbert Street constructed in 1906 was converted into a garage in 1924 (see Figure 60).



FIGURE 132. Garage. 501 Filbert St. (constructed in 1925).
Photo by Dennis Hearne.



FIGURE 133. Garage. 1636 Powell St. (constructed in 1916).
Photo: Google Street View.

Industrial Buildings

This building type may have a structure of reinforced concrete, or wood frame, or brick. It is found infrequently, mixed in with other building types. It is usually wider than the residential buildings, but not nearly so large as the big industrial buildings south of Market Street or on the waterfront. It tends to have just one or two stories, and sometimes a basement. The building may be ornamented in any of the styles discussed for other building types, or it may have no ornament. Cladding may be brick, stucco, tile, pressed metal, or wood. Uses are repair and/or storage, or small factories. Examples of small industrial buildings include: the Delucchi Sheet Metal Works building at 1526 Powell Street (constructed in 1921) with its pressed metal facade (**Figure 134**); the Old Spaghetti Factory (Landmark No. 127) at 466-78 Green Street (constructed in 1912), originally the Italian-American Paste Company; the Buon Gusto Sausage Factory building at 535 Green Street (constructed in 1926); the former home of the Friscia Seafoods processor/wholesaler including the tiled building at 555 Francisco Street (constructed in 1928) (see Figure A8) and the simply adorned building at 557 Francisco Street (constructed in 1930) (**Figure 135**); the Bauer and Schweitzer Malting Company Building (Landmark No. 129) at 530-50 Chestnut Street (constructed in 1906) which reflects the earlier character of industry in the area, now converted to housing.



FIGURE 134. Small Industrial Building.
1526 Powell St.
John J. Delucchi Sheet Metal Works.
(constructed in 1921).
Photo by John G. Corbett.



FIGURE 135. Small Industrial Building.
557 Francisco St.
(constructed in 1930).
Photo by John G. Corbett.

INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES

This building type is varied and rare. Most are on lots larger than the other building types. The only shared feature is their communal use. For a discussion of Institutional Resources see pages 114-120.

Churches

Churches include St. Francis of Assisi at 620 Vallejo Street, originally constructed in 1860, reconstructed in 1912 (see Figures 50 and 91); Saints Peter and Paul at 650 Filbert Street, founded in 1840, reconstructed between 1914 and 1939 (**Figure 136**) (see also Figure 36); and Our Lady of Guadalupe at 906 Broadway, established in 1875, reconstructed in 1912 (see Figure 51). The churches are taller than the vast majority of North Beach buildings, representing the cultural importance of the institutions that built them, and creating a skyline. Materials, structural types, and styles are as varied as the resources.



FIGURE 136. Institutional Resource: Church. Saints Peter and Paul Church on Washington Square. Photo by Caren Zisson.

Community Halls

Community Halls occupy locations on prominent streets. Those still serving the neighborhood include Fugazi Hall at 678 Green Street, formerly Casa Coloniale Italiana (constructed in 1912), which today houses Italian Community Services (see Figure A46), and the San Francisco Italian Athletic Club at 1630 Stockton Street. Examples of former community halls include Garibaldi Hall at 435-43 Broadway, the Washington Square Hall, later known as the Bersaglieri Hall, at 601-21 Union Street, and the site of the Ning Young District Association at 527-29 Broadway/12 Adler Place.

Schools

Schools include Francisco Middle School at 330 Francisco Street (constructed in 1939), Gordon Lau Elementary School, formerly Hancock Elementary School at 940 Filbert Street (constructed in 1909) (**Figure 137**), Garfield Elementary School at 420 Filbert Street (constructed c. 1981), Jean Parker Elementary School at 840 Broadway (a school site since 1861, current building constructed in 1997) (see Figure 88), John Yehall Chin Elementary School at 350 Broadway (constructed in 1914) (see Figure 89), and Saints Peter and Paul Elementary School at 608-20 Filbert Street (constructed in 1951).



FIGURE 137. Institutional Resource: School. 940 Filbert St. Gordon Lau Elementary School, Formerly John Hancock Elementary School. Photo: Google Street View.



FIGURE 138. Parks and Playgrounds.
Washington Square (Landmark No.226) Photo: Bing Maps.

PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS

The two parks in North Beach are Washington Square (**Figure 138**) and Joe DiMaggio Playground, formerly the North Beach Playground (see Figure 92). For a more detailed discussion of parks and playgrounds in North Beach, see pages 119-120.

INFRASTRUCTURE: PUBLIC SYSTEMS AND STREET FURNITURE

As discussed on page 84, the early city-sponsored surveys of the land into a grid of streets, blocks, and lots were the only public infrastructure in place when building first began in North Beach.

Street Plan. The plan of streets and blocks was developed by the 1847 O'Farrell Survey and as shown on the Eddy Red Line Map of 1851 (see Figure 5). These surveys by William M. Eddy laid out a grid of rectangular blocks bound by streets oriented north-south and east-west called the Fifty Vara Survey. The 1851 map designated a public square which became Washington Square. Although no alleys were shown in the 1847 survey, several alleys were shown on the 1851 survey in the future North Beach district. Most, if not all of these alleys, appear to have been taken from within the boundaries of the fifty vara lots, indicating that they were made by the private owners of those lots and not a result of the survey. The last major change in North Beach lot configurations occurred in the mid-1870's when Montgomery Avenue (now Columbus Avenue) was cut through the rigid grid pattern of streets. For a more detailed discussion of the history of the street plan of North Beach, see pages 11-15. To make room for growing use of the automobile, Columbus Avenue was widened, and the sidewalks narrowed, as part of the Works Project Administration (W.P.A.) street improvement projects between 1935 and 1942. (Keegan 2003) (**Figures 139 and 140**)



FIGURE 139. View of Montgomery Ave. (now Columbus Ave.) after 1875, showing wider sidewalks than today.
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library (AAB-3390).



FIGURE 140. Columbus Ave. during street widening, 1939.
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library (AAB-3401).

City Monuments. Among the first objects of the urban infrastructure to serve North Beach were reference points for land surveyors called “city monuments”. In contrast to “natural monuments” — trees, rocks, shorelines, etc. — which were common reference points for land surveyors in nineteenth and early twentieth-century California, city monuments were “artificial monuments” (Breed & Hosmer 1938: 134) built and placed by publicly employed city surveyors for both city and private use in the survey of streets, blocks, lots, and other features.

The earliest city monuments in San Francisco were probably impermanent markers like wood stakes, with or without a broad-headed nail on top indicating the precise reference point. Once a program to place permanent city monuments was underway, apparently before 1864 (San Francisco Board of Supervisors 1887: 317), many city monuments were made of stone. They continued to be made of stone into the twentieth century when new ones began to be made of concrete. City monuments were placed in streets, on sidewalks, and on buildings. Most commonly and most visible to the public, they were placed in the roadway within the intersections of streets where, in order not to obstruct traffic, they were recessed from the surface in holes or wells with a cast-iron cover at the surface to maintain the level of the street. Typically in San Francisco, they were placed off-center within the intersection.

The first permanent monuments in the area were in place no later than 1864. Ideally, city monuments were placed at the time that streets were first surveyed. However, in many areas of San Francisco, including North Beach, the streets were surveyed before permanent monuments were placed. This led to widely recognized problems in certain parts of the Fifty Vara District Survey, including “a majority of the blocks between Powell street, Market street and the Bay” which included North Beach. “The street lines ... was [sic] in a deplorable condition before the earthquake and fire... [they] were never legally fixed or definitely known. The City Engineers and County Surveyors of the past fixed the street lines as best they could, taking into consideration private property holdings and improvements. This caused, in a number of cases, several different street lines for the same block frontage... This system of fixing the street lines caused surplus of land in the block and confusion of titles... The earthquake of 1906 added to the confusion and made it still more difficult as the value of many known points fixing the street and monument lines, were destroyed.” (Holcomb 1910: 497)

To remedy this situation, “the Board of Supervisors, October 16, 1908, passed Resolution No.2764 (New Series) ordering the surveying, monumenting and mapping of the Fifty Vara, One Hundred Vara and Mission Districts and University Mound tract”. The Fifty Vara District map was completed and adopted by the Board of Supervisors on December 13, 1909. The City Engineer described the map that was to be prepared: “the map which will soon be submitted will show the exact position of the street lines of each block, the Monument lines, Monuments, Monument locations (or ties), all City property and the position of all improvements in each block on the date it was surveyed. It will show all usurpation or encroachments on City property – it will, in fact, be the only complete survey and map ever made of this district.” (Holcomb 1910: 497) The original of the map went to the City Recorder and copies were given to the City Engineer, the Secretary of State, and the State Surveyor General. **(Figure 143)**

The publicly visible part of each monument is, often, a circular cast-iron plate, typically decorated with stars and the letters: “City Mon”. **(Figure 141)** The Bureau of Street-Use and Mapping has original engineering drawings of some of these cast-iron covers, which vary somewhat in design and in some cases by neighborhood. An examination of these drawings may show the dates of the various designs. The stone monuments may generally date from 1909 or earlier and the dates of the cast iron plates are unknown. In October 2017, a reconnaissance of the sites of monuments shown on the Monument Map (see Figure 143) along Stockton and Mason Streets did not find any cast-iron plates marking the location of city monuments. Many of these monuments are probably still in place but the cast-iron plates have been removed or covered in asphalt. The plates themselves may also still exist elsewhere in the neighborhood. Visible on some North Beach sidewalks are Survey Monuments placed in the 1970s. **(Figure 142)**

The Surveyor (variously also known as the County Surveyor, the City Surveyor, and the City & County Surveyor) was one of the original public officials of the City of San Francisco upon its incorporation in 1850. As it has been from the start, and as it continues to be, the work of the surveyor is fundamental to the clear delineation of public and private property. Every street and every residential lot is defined with reference to nearby city monuments. The abstract description of property as presented in maps and deeds, is connected to the actual conditions on the ground by the surveyor using the city monuments.

In addition to city monuments, the Bureau of Engineering created “a system of Precise Levels... establishing about 1,000 permanent Bench Marks”. (Holcomb 1910: 498) While city monuments are reference points for surveying on the ground, bench marks are reference points for elevation above sea level, long defined in San Francisco as the City Base and now called the Old City Datum.



FIGURE 141. Hand Hole Cover for a City Monument, date unknown. This example is at the end of Saturn St. in Eureka Valley. Photo by Michael Corbett



FIGURE 142. Survey Monument in North Beach at Stockton St. and Green St., 1970s. Photo by Judith Powell

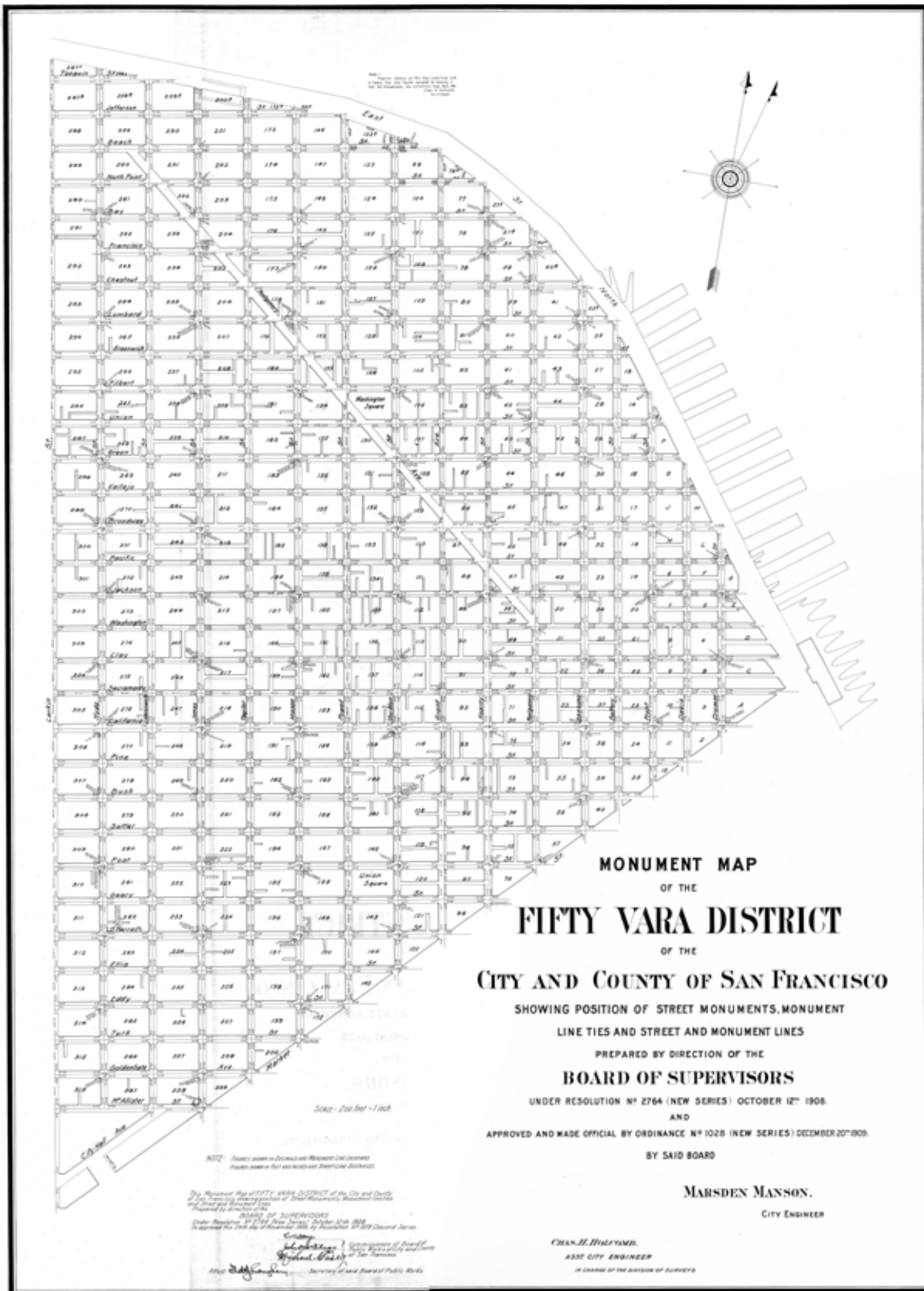


FIGURE 143. Monument Map of the Fifty Vara District of the City and County of San Francisco, 1909.
Bureau of Street Use and Mapping.

Block Subdivisions. Each block was originally divided into six fifty vara lots. As the city expanded as an urbanized place, almost every original fifty vara lot was subdivided, initially into three to six lots, each more suitable for a city house or a rowhouse than for a house surrounded by a garden and farm animals. The subdivision of those lots into smaller lots typically ranged from about twenty to fifty feet wide and no more than 137 feet 6 inches deep. It was in the process of subdividing the fifty vara lots that the alleys were created (see Figure 7). Since 1906 there have been very few lot consolidations.

Street Paving. Beginning in the mid-1800's, the city graded and paved streets with gravel, basalt block, and brick when horses powered transportation, and with concrete and asphalt when automobiles replaced horses. Basalt block and brick paving survive in places under later layers of asphalt. An example where brick can still be seen is on Kearny Street (Macchiarini Steps) between Broadway and Vallejo Street.

Sidewalks. Most concrete sidewalks in North Beach appear to date from the reconstruction period after the 1906 earthquake. Some sidewalks may be stamped with the date and name of the contractor who built the sidewalk.

Sidewalk Lights. Extensions of the basements of commercial buildings under adjacent sidewalks are called sidewalk vaults, lit by natural light through grids of round or square lenses called sidewalk lights. "Beginning in the 1850s, sidewalk vault lights became a common feature among the burgeoning manufacturing districts of America's urban streetscapes." (Stachelberg 2003: 1) The use of prismatic glass that reflected the sun's rays further into basement areas, and the use of reinforced concrete panels made sidewalk lights popular through the 1930's. Their use declined as electric lights became cheaper and better. A number of sidewalk lights still exist in the commercial areas of North Beach today, but some appear to have been covered over as sidewalks were repaired. A few examples of the type found in North Beach include those at 373 Columbus Avenue in front of Molinari Deli (**Figure 144**), and at 261 Columbus Avenue in front of City Lights Bookstore (**Figure 145**), and the restored sidewalk lights at 373 Broadway in front of Coi Restaurant.



FIGURE 144. Sidewalk lights at 373 Columbus Ave.
Located in front of Molinari Deli.
Photo by Nancy Shanhan.

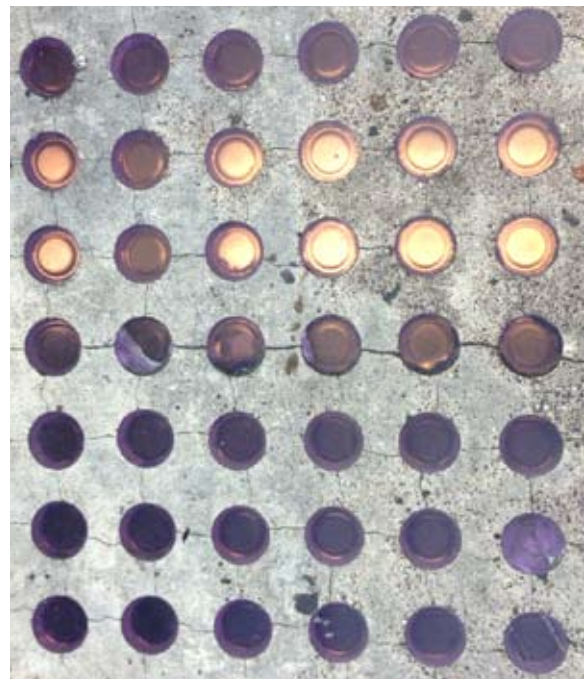


FIGURE 145. Sidewalk lights at 261 Columbus Ave.
Located in front of City Lights Bookstore.
Photo by Judith Powell.

Curbs. Original curbs were built of quarried granite rather than concrete. Many still exist in North Beach. **(Figure 146)** San Francisco's *Better Streets Plan*, adopted in 2010 provides that if granite curbs are removed during street repairs they should be reused, either on-site or on other streetscape projects. (San Francisco *Better Streets Plan*, p. 215)



FIGURE 146. Granite curb in front of 1630 Stockton St.
Located in front of the Italian Athletic Club
on Washington Square. Photo by J. G. Corbett.



FIGURE 147. Street light on Columbus Ave.
Manufactured by the Taper Tube Pole Co.
Photo by Nancy Shanahan.

Streetlights. Ornamental streetlights manufactured by the Taper Tube Pole Company were installed along Columbus Avenue in the 1930's. **(Figure 147)**

Staircases in Public Rights-of-Way. Staircases were built by the City in streets that were too steep for horses or motor vehicles. The first were utilitarian wood structures. Later, concrete staircases were built, some with ornamental embellishments like railings with balusters. In addition to the stair in Jack Micheline Place (formerly Pardee Alley) between Kramer Place and Grant Avenue **(Figure 148)** other examples of such staircases include the Montgomery Street stairs between Union Street and Green Street, the Vallejo Street stairs between Kearny Street and Montgomery Street, the Child Street stairs between Lombard Street and Telegraph Place, and the Telegraph Hill Boulevard steps between Greenwich Street and Lombard Street.



FIGURE 148. Stair in Jack Micheline Place
(formerly Pardee Alley).
Photo by J. G. Corbett.

Water Lines. San Francisco's water supply was controlled by the Spring Valley Water Company from the mid 1860s to 1930.

Longtime efforts to create a public water supply including the development of the Hetch Hetchy system resulted in the takeover of the Spring Valley Water Company and the establishment of the San Francisco Water Department in 1930. The new system was complete and Hetch Hetchy water was delivered in 1934.

The presence of water lines is evident in manhole and handhole covers. Most are marked San Francisco Water Department or Hetch Hetchy, but there are surviving covers from the Spring Valley Water Company. (**Figure 149**)



FIGURE 149. Handhole cover for Spring Valley Water Co. (before 1931) at Columbus Ave. and Vallejo St.
Photo by Dennis Hearne.

In addition to the municipal water supply, a private pipeline of the Olympic Salt Water Company brought salt water from Ocean Beach to the Crystal Palace Baths (For more details see page 117); iron covers for this system may also survive.

Auxiliary Water Supply System. After the 1906 earthquake, a new high-pressure system for fighting fires, the Auxiliary Water Supply System (AWSS), was put in place. Manhole covers, fire hydrants usually stamped 1909, with painted tops, and brick circles in street intersections that mark cisterns are all visible features of the AWSS. The blue-painted tops indicate that the water in these hydrants comes from the Jones Street tank at Jones and Clay streets. (**Figures 150 and 151**)



FIGURE 150. (above) AWSS cistern at Grant Ave. and Union St.
Photo by J. G. Corbett.



FIGURE 151. (right) AWSS hydrant (1909) at Powell St. and Francisco St. Photo by J. G. Corbett.

Gas Lines. The presence of gas pipelines that originally brought manufactured gas and now bring natural gas to buildings is evident in cast iron manhole and handhole covers. **(Figure 152)** Most of these today are marked “PG&E,” but there may be covers from earlier companies surviving in North Beach. In particular, there may be covers that were first installed by PG&E’s predecessor in the neighborhood, the San Francisco Coke and Gas Company. PG&E’s huge cylindrical gas holder at Powell and Jefferson streets was long visible from North Beach. (See Figure 57 in which PG&E’s gas holder is visible in the upper left hand corner.) Great Western Power Company (GWP), founded in 1905, was a competitor of PG&E which bought a majority of their stock in 1930. GWP Co. continued to operate separately until 1935. **(Figure 153)**

Electricity. Key events in the development of infrastructure systems for San Francisco including North Beach were the arrival of the first hydroelectric power from the Sierra Nevada in 1921, the arrival of Hetch Hetchy water and power in 1934, and the competition between PG&E and the Great Western Power Company in the 1910s to 1930s. Electricity was originally delivered to the neighborhood on wood utility poles. Today the neighborhood is largely within an Underground Public Utilities District and the poles have been removed



FIGURE 152. Manhole cover for PG&E (after World War II) at Grant Ave. and Filbert St.
Photo by Dennis Hearne.



FIGURE 153. Manhole cover for Great Western Power Co. (ca. 1905-1935), intersection of Stockton St. and Filbert St.
Photo by Michael Corbett.



Sewers. The city built sewer lines, first with wood pipes that dumped raw sewage into the bay. Beginning in the 1870’s, new brick sewers were designed by civil engineers according to the new standards of public sanitation brought about by the public health movement. The presence of sewers is evident in manhole covers marked “sewer” or “Department of Public Works.” **(Figure 154)**

FIGURE 154. Manhole cover for D.P.W. Sewer at Powell St. and Vallejo St. Photo by Judith Powell.

Cast Iron Utility Covers. The cast iron utility covers (handhole covers and manhole covers) are significant for many reasons. See Figures 149, 150, 152 - 154. They were intended to convey information about their purpose and their owner, to be attractive, and to provide a safe surface for pedestrians and vehicles in all kinds of weather. Among those who designed them were architectural draftsmen for the utility companies and the Department of Public Works who were seeking various kinds of experience or who were laid off during slow periods in architecture. They represent the role of engineering technology in the functioning of the city. They represent the role of government and large corporations in providing systems used by everyone. They represent the role of labor in building and maintaining the infrastructure of the city.

Street Clocks. Privately owned ornamental street clocks were placed on public sidewalks. For much of the twentieth century, there were at least three clocks on Columbus Avenue, including one in front of Cavalli Books (now City Lights) and one outside the R. Matteucci and Company jewelry store, which was damaged and removed in 1999. (Figure 155)



FIGURE 155. Street clocks on Columbus Ave.
J. B. Monaco. (jbmonaco.com, Telegraph Hill and North Beach Photo Gallery, image 23 of 91)

VII. CONTEXT THEMES AND ASSOCIATED RESOURCES

The historic context presented above identifies a number of themes in the history of North Beach beginning in 1906 that represent significant aspects of the neighborhood's history. The theme sections below discuss buildings, structures, objects, and sites for their significance individually, and as contributors to potential significant districts. Significant districts can be defined under several different themes, and individual buildings, structures, objects, and sites can be contributors to several districts. In relation to each theme, one or more property types that convey the significance of that theme are summarized below.

THEME 1: RECONSTRUCTION 1906 TO 1915

Summary of Significance

The reconstruction of North Beach after its almost complete destruction in the 1906 earthquake and fire was widely considered to be complete by 1915. Thus, the period of significance for this theme is 1906 to 1915. This reconstruction is represented by several key building types. Residential building types underwent important changes from the beginning of this period to the end, shaped by changes in city building laws and state Tenement House laws.

Except for a relatively small number of these buildings on the south side of Broadway and on Columbus Avenue, virtually all of the buildings from this period are of wood construction. Almost uniformly, they are treated with facade ornamentation derived from Renaissance and Baroque architecture, including cornices, belt courses, pilaster and column orders, window and door moldings, and other details. For the historical background of the reconstruction of North Beach, see pages 22-43.

Of the property types and resources discussed in Chapter VI, the following are associated resources of this theme.

Flats. Flats are the most numerous buildings from the reconstruction period in North Beach. Although few stand out individually, collectively they are extremely important to the district. Some flats have ground floor stores. While all reconstruction types are significant, flats might be said to be first among equals.

Type I. Standard Flats

Type II. "Cuneo" Flats

Type III. Flat Iron Mixed Use Buildings

Type IV. Romeo Flats

Type V. Alley Flats

For a detailed discussion of flats as a property type, see pages 125-131.

Hotels. Most North Beach hotels were built in the first two years after the earthquake. Hotels on the south side of Broadway and on Columbus south of Broadway were of brick or reinforced concrete construction, as they were within the area where the City required "fireproof" construction after the 1906 earthquake and fire. (See pages 25-27.) Elsewhere they were primarily of wood construction. Hotels were residential buildings whose units usually shared baths and always lacked kitchen facilities. They were of varying sizes, usually with stores on the ground floor. For a detailed discussion of hotels as a property type, see page 132.

Apartments. Few apartment buildings were built right after the earthquake because there were greater

restrictions on them than on flats. Apartments are multi-unit residential buildings with a single outside entrance, leading through a lobby or directly up a staircase to upper level self-contained living units (with kitchens and bathrooms) with interior doors. Many apartment buildings have ground floor stores. For a detailed discussion of apartments as a property type, see page 133.

Dwellings: Cottages and Other Types. One and two-story wood dwellings were built throughout North Beach after 1906. Dwellings of all types were built at both the fronts and backs of lots. For a detailed discussion of dwellings as a property type, see page 134.

Fireproof Commercial Blocks. Built within the area where the City required “fireproof” construction after the 1906 earthquake and fire, most of these buildings are found on the south side of Broadway and on Columbus Avenue south of Broadway within the two half blocks bordering on the Jackson Square Historic District. As within the Jackson Square Historic District, this building type is predominately small, two to three-stories, usually of brick, but sometimes of concrete construction. Built primarily to house businesses in the reconstruction period, they often had stores below and offices, halls, residential or other spaces above. For a detailed discussion of fireproof commercial blocks as a property type, see pages 135-133.

One-Story Frame Stores. Right after the earthquake, a number of one-story wood structures were built for stores. Those that survive are on Columbus Avenue, Powell Street, Green Street, and scattered elsewhere. For a detailed discussion of one-story frame stores as a property type, see page 139.

Storefronts. North Beach buildings were designed with a coherent, unified and stylish upper section that typically remains intact, and a contrasting ground floor for shops. Surviving elements of the original post-earthquake era storefronts that should be preserved include brick or wooden bulkheads or bases with moldings, simple pilasters or posts between stores, plate glass windows often held in place by copper or other metal strips with a Greek key decoration, a short, vertically divided transom or clerestory window strip above the display window, and angled store entry vestibules. Often there is a recess to hold a rolled awning. For a detailed discussion of storefronts as a property type, see pages 140-141.

Others. While the principal building types that represent the reconstruction of North Beach are described above, others that were part of the same development were built as well. **Garages, industrial buildings, churches, community halls, schools, theaters, ball courts, parks and playgrounds and infrastructure** are also significant in the theme of Reconstruction, but are described in relation to other themes below. For a detailed discussion of these property types, see pages 142-154.

National Register and California Register Criteria for Evaluating Significance

Criteria	Significance	Discussion
A/1	Patterns & Events	Buildings in the period from 1906 to 1915 may be significant for their association with the rapid rebuilding of North Beach after its almost complete destruction from the earthquake and fire of 1906. This significance is best realized by the overall continuity and consistency of style, scale, use, building methods and materials. Residential building types underwent important changes from the beginning of this period to the end, shaped by changes in city building laws and state Tenement House laws. Also associated with the rapid rebuilding was the construction of Camp Cottages, Bonus Houses, and Grant-and-Loan Houses, financed with the assistance of the San Francisco Relief and Red Cross Funds, a Corporation (The Corporation). The rapid

Criteria	Significance	Discussion
A/1 (cont.)	Patterns & Events	reconstruction of North Beach included the rebuilding of its commercial corridors in their previous locations, to serve the needs of its largely Italian neighborhood. Buildings in this period are also potentially significant for their association with Italians, who dominated the area and were primarily responsible for rebuilding the neighborhood following the earthquake and fire as owners, architects, skilled masons and construction workers, as well as Italian bankers who provided the funds and lumber for rebuilding. While many properties may qualify individually for their association with this pattern/event, most would qualify as contributors to a district or districts, as discussed below. Many examples are listed in Appendix B: Listed Resources - 1982 North Beach Survey. This list of examples is not all inclusive.
B/2	Persons	The potential exists for any property to be significant for its association with important persons who may be identified in research on individual properties. Likely types of persons who may be significant under this criterion are those who made important contributions to the neighborhood or the city of San Francisco. For example, buildings built or occupied by A. P. Giannini, John F. Fugazi or Andrea Sbarboro, Italian bankers who financed the rebuilding North Beach, James D. Phelan, the president of The Corporation, or Abe Ruef, a political boss during this period, are potentially significant. A few examples of buildings that are potentially individually significant for their association with important persons include the Fugazi Building at 678 Green St. commissioned by John F. Fugazi, and the Hildebrand Stable at 721 Filbert St. commissioned by Abe Ruef, and A. P. Giannini's Bank of America Building at 1455 Stockton Street. This list of examples is not all inclusive.
C/3	Architecture/ Design	Buildings of this period may be significant for their architecture as expressed by intact stylistic features, forms, construction methods, or distinctive aesthetic quality. Buildings may also qualify as an important development in the work of an architect or prominent builder. Individual resources qualified under this criterion should be good examples of types and/or styles, and retain most of their original features. A few examples of individual resources significant for their architecture include the works of Louis Mastropasqua at 510-12 Green St., 833-37 Greenwich and 2032-34 Powell St. and the works of Italo Zanolini at 678 Green St., 253-55 Columbus Ave, and 270 Columbus Ave. Many other examples of architecturally significant buildings are referenced in Appendixes A: North Beach Architects and B: Listed Resources - 1982 North Beach Survey. Rare or unique forms should also be given strong consideration for individual listing. For example, one-story frame stores at 1337-39 Grant Ave. and 309-29 Columbus Ave. Of equal potential significance are those that lack stylistic characteristics and might be described as vernacular. Some may also be significant as a notable response to the building laws or Tenement House law, or for their construction pursuant to the building plans of The Corporation. For example, two Bonus Plan houses have been identified in North Beach at 351-353 and 357 Union Street, both designed by Kidd & Anderson and built in 1906. The above examples are not all inclusive.

Criteria	Significance	Discussion
D/4	Information Potential	Buildings, ruins or subsurface remains may be significant for their potential to yield important information about construction methods and materials, or the evolution of local residential building development. Examples may include the original pre-earthquake foundations, walls, maritime features, human remains, or other artifacts. One example is the extant wall of the original Broadway Jail, located on Romolo Place at the rear of 534 Broadway.

District

Although many individual properties may be significant under the criteria above, most would be eligible as contributors to a district in the theme of **Reconstruction 1906 to 1915**. The 1906 fire wiped out all of the existing buildings, except for the shell of St. Francis of Assisi Church, but left the layout of streets and lots, and the mostly Italian-American ownership intact. North Beach was almost entirely rebuilt, in a pattern that directly followed the early land use, one year after the earthquake and fire. It was the first part of the City to be rebuilt due to several significant factors.

Two Italian bankers, A. P. Giannini (Banca d'Italia, now Bank of America) and Andrea Sbarboro (Banco Italo-Americano, now merged into Bank of America) helped their compatriots by loans on personal acquaintance with the borrowers, and by shipping in lumber. Unlike much of the City, fire resistant construction was not required in North Beach (except for a two block area on the south side of Broadway) enabling owners to more quickly and cheaply rebuild wood frame homes and businesses. Another factor in the quick reconstruction was the presence of many architects, contractors, skilled masons, and construction workers among the Italian population, and their sense that North Beach was their district. Italian mutual aid societies also provided support for rebuilding efforts.

Resulting from its rapid rebuilding on previous patterns, the physical setting of North Beach possesses an overall continuity transcending its variety. The consistency extends beyond one style and embraces also scale and use. Architecturally, several elements contribute to this consistency. As the buildings of North Beach were overwhelmingly built between 1906 and 1915, they were built at consistent sizes and scales using consistent methods and materials under the same building laws. A narrow range of building types was produced. The facades were treated in the same styles. Almost every building was built to the front and sides of its lot, leaving varying amounts of open space at the rear. On hillsides they climb in even steps, the basement or ground floor accommodating the adjustment from level. The buildings were all built with modest budgets.

The boundaries for a district in the Reconstruction theme would include the North Beach survey area except some areas at the north end of the survey area where there are the largest concentrations of buildings built after 1915. However, since North Beach has changed little in appearance since 1915, it might be reasonable to combine the themes of **Reconstruction 1906 to 1915** and **Expansion and Infill 1916 to 1941** (Theme II below) as a **Neighborhood Development** theme for the entire period from 1906 to 1941. Such a district would include most if not all of the survey area and would be one of the strongest and most inclusive districts in North Beach.

Jackson Square Historic District Extension. The Jackson Square Historic District Extension, identified in the 1982 North Beach Survey and listed in the California Historic Resources Inventory, represents an extension of the Jackson Square Historic District from its present northern boundary up to the center line of Broadway, between Sansome and Kearny Streets. As in the Jackson Square Historic District, the predom-

inant building type is the small commercial brick block, two or three stories, within an area where the City required “fireproof” construction after the 1906 earthquake and fire. These two half-blocks bordering on the Jackson Square Historic District are similar in building type, material, scale, style and historical use. Although a number of these buildings, as part of the Broadway entertainment district, have attention-seeking, ground-floor facades, most can be restored through simple facings and the use of paint. Three buildings within the Jackson Square Historic District Extension are already listed on the National Register of Historic Places: the Old Ohio Street Houses at 17, 41-47 and 55-59 Osgood Place (see Figure 119). Eleven were cited for architectural merit in the San Francisco Department of City Planning’s 1976 survey.

THEME II: EXPANSION AND INFILL 1916 TO 1941

Summary of Significance

With almost no room to build, North Beach has changed little in its appearance since 1915. During this period, temporary buildings were replaced and vacant lots infilled -- still with dwellings, flats and apartments -- many of which differed from their earlier counterparts by incorporating automobile garages in their original designs and by use of brick veneer. Only a few large buildings were constructed, such as the church of Saints Peter and Paul on the north side of Washington Square (See Figure 36) and the six-story apartment at 290 Lombard Street constructed in the 1930’s (see Figure 37).

This period also included a wave of remodelling of existing reconstruction period buildings in the Moderne style, inspired by the 1939 Golden Gate International Exposition. Occurring primarily on or around Washington Square Park, these changes included stucco siding, and the replacement of existing ornament with Streamline Moderne or Art Deco motifs such as speed lines for cornices, bas reliefs (e.g. Mayan figures and zigzags), stepped horizontals and vertical divisions. For more detail see pages 48 and 87.

Also significant during this period, beginning in the mid-1930s and extending beyond this period, was the construction of a few new buildings in modernist styles, including the Streamline Moderne building at 470 Columbus Avenue (see Figure 96). For more detail see pages 120-123. See also Appendix C: Modern Architects in North Beach.

Every property type and resource associated with the **Reconstruction** theme was also built during this period: **flats (all types), Romeo flats, hotels, apartments, dwellings, commercial buildings, institutional, industrial and infrastructure**. In addition, the following property types and resources discussed in Chapter V are associated with this theme.

Flats Type VI. Flats Incorporating a Garage. In the 1920s, with increasing use of automobiles, many flats were built that were similar in most ways to Type I (Standard Flats) except that they incorporated a garage and usually had a brick veneer on the ground floor or the entire street facade. Decorative detail was, as before, derived from Classical and Renaissance precedents, or it was visually compatible with the Arts and Crafts movement, California’s Hispanic heritage, or Mediterranean vernacular architecture. For a detailed discussion of flats incorporating a garage as a property type, see pages 46 and 131.

Garages. With increasing use of automobiles, garages for parking, service, and repair were built in scattered locations throughout North Beach. A few commercial garages were built of brick or reinforced concrete on major streets. Several private wood garages were built elsewhere. In addition, garages were built into the ground levels of many existing buildings. For historical background of private transportation see pages 72-73. For a discussion of garages as a property type, see page 142.

Commercial. Commercial buildings built during this period include banks, such as 270 Columbus Avenue, originally built for the Italian-American Bank (see Figure A47), and 1455 Stockton Street, originally built for the Bank of Italy, now the Bank of America (see Figure 121). In addition many existing commercial buildings were remodeled with stucco facades in the Moderne style inspired by the 1939 Golden Gate International Exposition. These remodels are now more than 50 years old and may be considered potential historic resources. Neon signs were attached to buildings on major streets. While some neon signs have been lost, many still exist including the La Pantera sign at 1234 Grant Avenue, the interior and exterior Little City Meats signs at 1400 Stockton Street, the Gino and Carlo sign 548 Green Street, the Columbus Cafe sign at 562 Green Street, the Mona Lisa sign at 353 Columbus Avenue, and numerous others throughout the commercial district. For historical background of commercial buildings see pages 66-69. For a discussion of commercial buildings as a property type, see pages 135-142.

National Register and California Register Criteria for Evaluating Significance

Criteria	Significance	Discussion
A/1	Patterns & Events	Buildings in the period from 1916 to 1941 are potentially significant for their association with the overarching theme of Expansion and Infill , when vacant lots were infilled and temporary buildings were replaced. Buildings that represent important subthemes within this primary theme may be significant: As a result of the growing influence of the automobile, many flats were built that were similar in most ways to the flats built during the Reconstruction period except that they incorporated garages. A few examples include 220-22 Francisco St., 1725-27 Mason St., and 602-10 Lombard St. Garages for parking, service, and repair were built, and garages were added to the ground level of many existing buildings. A few examples include the garages at 501 Filbert St. and 1636 Powell St. The 1939 Golden Gate International Exposition inspired a wave of remodelling of existing Reconstruction period buildings with stucco facades in the Moderne or Art Deco style. A few examples of facades remodelled in the late 1930s include 501-47 Columbus Ave, 500-24 Columbus Ave., and 601-15 Union St. The heralding of the modernist architectural styles beginning in the mid-1930s resulted in a number of new buildings in this style, including, for example the Streamline Moderne building at 470 Columbus Ave. and the mid-century modern apartment building at 325-27 Lombard St. See also Appendix C: Modern Architects in North Beach. Above examples are not all inclusive.
B/2	Persons	The potential exists for any property to be significant for its association with important persons, who may be identified in research on individual properties. Likely types of persons who may be significant here are those who made important contributions to the neighborhood or the city of San Francisco. One example is the art studio at 521-23 Francisco St., designed by noted architect Henry Temple Howard for renowned local artists Adaline Kent and Robert Boardman Howard.

Criteria	Significance	Discussion
C/3	Architecture/ Design	Buildings of this period may be significant for their architecture as expressed by intact stylistic features, forms, construction methods, or distinctive aesthetic quality. Buildings may also qualify as an important development in the work of an architect or prominent builder. Individual resources qualified under these criteria should be good examples of types and/or styles, and retain most of their original forms. A few examples of individual resources significant for their architecture include Saints Peter and Paul Church and the works of prominent architects such as Martin Rist at 470 Columbus Ave., Hertzka & Knowles at 386-88/392-94 Chestnut St., and Gardner Dailey at 325-29 Lombard St. This list of examples is not all inclusive.
D/4	Information Potential	Buildings, ruins or subsurface remains that have the potential to yield important information about construction methods and materials, or the evolution of local building development may be significant for their potential to provide information important to history.

District

Because most of the changes that occurred during this period did not alter the overall continuity, scale and uses, and harmonized with the predominate style of the neighborhood, it would be reasonable to combine the themes of **Expansion and Infill 1916 to 1941** with **Reconstruction 1906 to 1915** as a **Neighborhood Development** theme for the entire period from 1906 to 1941. Such a district would include most if not all of the survey area and would be one of the strongest and most inclusive districts in North Beach. Although many individual properties may be significant under the criteria above, further work would have to be done to determine if a district defined only by the **Expansion and Infill** theme or one of its subthemes (remodelings inspired by the 1939 Golden Gate International Exposition and new buildings in the modernist style) would stand on its own.

THEME III: DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH BEACH AFTER 1941

Summary of Significance

During this period, North Beach experienced a second wave of remodelling of the property types discussed in Themes I and II above. While the remodelling of the 1930's was an aesthetic choice to improve and update the appearance of buildings, another wave of remodelling began after World War II was generated by more mundane considerations. Following the Depression years and World War II, the overwhelmingly wood building stock was in need of maintenance and repairs. New inexpensive materials marketed for low-maintenance were used by some building owners. As a result, the facades of some wood buildings were covered in stucco or in asbestos, vinyl or aluminum siding; wood windows were replaced by aluminum sash with mullions adjusted to factory sizes, and cornices and decorative features were removed for a "modern" look. Although this second wave of remodelling of reconstruction period property types has not been identified as significant, it may be shown to possess significance in the future. In addition, despite such changes, so long as the original form, massing and door/window configuration remains intact, these buildings are capable of restoration.

Major infrastructure constructed during this period included the Broadway Tunnel in 1952, connecting North Beach to the western part of the City, and completion of the Embarcadero Freeway on-ramp in 1960 that connected North Beach to the East Bay and the San Francisco Peninsula. These changes ended

the neighborhood's relative isolation, increasing automobile traffic and access by visitors to North Beach restaurants and entertainment. For a discussion of the changes that resulted from development of this infrastructure see page 49.

The construction of Modern style buildings, which began in the mid-1930s continued after 1941 through the 1970s. As discussed below under the theme of **Architecture**, these resources could be identified as individually significant, or could be included in a district. Buildings in North Beach designed by Modern architects are listed in Appendix C: Modern Architects in North Beach.

District

Although this second wave of remodelling of reconstruction period property types has not been identified as significant, it may be shown to possess significance in the future. In addition, despite such changes, so long as the original form, massing and door/window configuration remains intact, these buildings are capable of restoration and may contribute to a district under the themes **Reconstruction 1906 to 1915** and/or **Expansion and Infill 1916 to 1941**. As discussed below under the theme of **Architecture**, the modernist style buildings constructed during this period could be identified as individually significant, or could be included in a district.

THEME IV: SOCIAL GROUPS AND SOCIAL LIFE

Summary of Significance

The following subthemes are associated with the theme of **Social Groups and Social Life of North Beach**:

Italians. Because North Beach is significant for the period 1906 to 1941 as the focus of Italian life and culture in San Francisco, property types associated with Italians have the potential to be significant in relation to this theme, including **flats** of all varieties (including **Romeo flats**), **hotels, apartments, dwellings, commercial** buildings of all types, and **institutional resources** described in the themes of **Reconstruction 1906 to 1915** and/or **Expansion and Infill 1916 to 1941** above. Because of this association, North Beach has been called Little Italy. The Italians, who dominated the area for much of its history, were primarily responsible for rebuilding the neighborhood after the earthquake and fire of 1906 before any other section of the City. Most of the architects, skilled masons and construction workers who rebuilt North Beach were Italian, as were A. P. Giannini and Andrea Sbarboro, the bankers who provided the funds and the lumber for rebuilding. Of the many buildings associated with this subtheme, some notable examples of commercial buildings include the bank buildings at 270 Columbus Avenue, which was the North Beach Branch of Sbarboro's Banco Italo-Americano, and 1455 Stockton Street, which was Giannini's Columbus Branch of the Bank of Italy. Institutional resources significant to this theme include the churches of Saints Peter and Paul on Washington Square and St. Francis of Assisi; and buildings associated with voluntary societies, including the Italian Community Center at 678 Green Street called the Casa Coloniale Italiana (now Fugazi Hall), Garibaldi Hall at 435-44 Broadway, the Italian Athletic Club at 1630 Stockton, and the Italian Club in the former Bersaglieri Hall at 601-21 Union Street. This list of examples is not meant to be inclusive. See pages 49-53 for more detailed information. Further research would identify other important buildings associated with this subtheme.

Chinese. While the major presence of persons of Chinese descent in North Beach did not begin until after World War II, individual properties of all types may be significant for their association with this social group. Types of properties that may be significant would include the first or early buildings of North Beach that were used by or resided in by people of Chinese descent. An example is the site of the oldest Chinese

District Association, the Ning Yung Company at 527-29 Broadway, identified as individually significant in the 1982 North Beach Survey. Another example is the Knights of Pythias Hall at 1524 Powell Street, which became the Cathay Hall of the American League, a Chinese organization by 1949. 357 Union Street (see Figure 29) is significant as the home of Him Mark Lai and Laura Lai which became a hub of Chinese-American history. Their research resulted in prolific writings, lectures and teaching. Him Mark Lai wrote and edited 10 books and more than 100 scholarly articles on Chinese-American life -- a field ignored by non-Asian historians. His work and teaching helped pioneer Asian-American Studies in colleges and universities. The Chronicle of Higher Education named Him Mark Lai “the scholar who legitimized the study of Chinese America.” The house at 357 Union Street embodied Lai’s immersion in the field where he collected, documented, organized and preserved historical assets in Chinese and English. This list of examples is not meant to be inclusive. See pages 54-55 for more detailed information. Further research would identify other important buildings associated with this subtheme.

Bohemians and Beats. Bohemians of various sorts have been in North Beach throughout its history. Bohemians and Beats have had an important presence in the history of North Beach, occupying existing flats, hotels, and apartments, and establishing and patronizing businesses in existing buildings. The period of significance for Beats in North Beach begins about 1950. Although opinions vary as to when the Beat era ended, according to the The Landmarks Designation Case Report for City Lights Booksellers and Publishers, most literary scholars set the date at around 1965. In addition to many individually significant resources, North Beach is a potential historic district for its concentration of extant resources associated with the Beats. See pages 56-58 for information and examples of significant sites and persons associated with this theme. Further research would identify other important buildings associated with this subtheme.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ). Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people have had an important presence in North Beach beginning in the 1930s, occupying existing flats, hotels, and apartments, and establishing and patronizing businesses in existing buildings. The the period of significance is 1933 to 1965.

North Beach has been identified as San Francisco’s first bar-based LGBTQ community by the *Citywide Historic Context Statement for LGBTQ History in San Francisco* for the City and County San Francisco dated October 2015 (“LGBTQ Context Statement”). Some of the earliest and most significant queer spaces in San Francisco were located in North Beach. In addition to many individually significant resources, North Beach has been recognized by the LGBTQ Context Statement as a potential historic district for the clusters of extant resources that it holds. See also pages 59-60 for information and examples of significant sites and persons associated with this theme. Further research would identify significant sites and persons associated with this subtheme.

Settlement Houses and Kindergartens. The Settlement House and Kindergarten movements were active in North Beach from the 1870s to 1949 or later, building and occupying buildings as kindergartens, orphanages, day houses, and neighborhood associations. Notable is the so-called “Maybeck Building” at 1736 Stockton Street (see Figure 48), identified as individually significant by the 1982 North Beach Survey for its association with the architect Bernard Maybeck, for its use between 1907-54 by the Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Association, and for its architecture. Sarah B. Cooper, internationally known as the pioneer in Kindergarten education, founded the second San Francisco kindergarten on Union Street in North Beach. This list of examples is not meant to be inclusive. See pages 61-62 for more detailed information. Further research would identify other important buildings associated with this subtheme.

Voluntary Societies. Voluntary societies have been active in North Beach from the 1850s to the present. Some have occupied spaces in existing buildings. Others have had their own buildings, notably Garibaldi

Hall at 435-444 Broadway, the Italian Club at 601-21 Union Street, Fugazi Hall at 674-78 Green Street (still home to The Italian Community Services), and the Knights of Pythias at 1524 Powell Street. Further research is necessary to identify and describe other important buildings associated with this theme. These property types are usually also important in association with specific social or ethnic groups. This list of examples is not meant to be inclusive. See pages 62-64 for more detailed information. Further research would identify other important buildings associated with this subtheme.

Churches. Neighborhood churches in North Beach were important centers for cultural and social activities, as well as places to attend services and receive sacraments. Resources significant to this theme include the churches of Saints Peter and Paul on Washington Square, St. Francis of Assisi (Landmark No. 4), and Our Lady of Guadalupe Roman Catholic Church (Landmark No. 204). See pages 64-66 for more detailed information.

National Register and California Register Criteria for Evaluating Significance

Criteria	Significance	Discussion
A/1	Patterns & Events	<p>As discussed above, buildings associated with the theme of Social Groups and Social Life are potentially significant in connection with the following subthemes:</p> <p>Italians - North Beach is significant as the focus of Italian life and culture. Property types, including flats, hotels, apartments, dwellings, commercial and institutional resources, may be significant in relation to this subtheme. The period of significance is 1906-1941.</p> <p>Chinese - North Beach is significant for the early presence of Chinese immigrants, which increased greatly after World War II. Types of properties that may be significant would include the first or early buildings of North Beach used by or resided in by people of Chinese descent, including family associations. The period of significance has not been determined.</p> <p>Bohemians and Beats - North Beach is significant for its association with Bohemians and Beats throughout its history. Property types, including existing flats, hotels and apartments, and business locations occupied or patronized by them may be significant for their association in relation to this subtheme. The period of significance for Beats in North Beach begins about 1950 to to approximately 1965.</p> <p>LGBTQ - North Beach is significant for some of the earliest and most significant queer spaces in San Francisco lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer people have had an important presence in North Beach, occupying existing flats, hotels, and apartments, and establishing and patronizing businesses in existing buildings, which would be significant by association in relation to this subtheme. The beginning date for the period of significance is 1933 to 1965.</p> <p>Settlement Houses and Kindergartens - North Beach is significant for its association with early Settlement House and Kindergarten movements in response to its large immigrant population. Property types including existing residential or commercial buildings, or those constructed specifically for these purposes may be significant in relation to this sub-theme. The period of significance is from the 1870s to 1949 or later.</p>

A/1 (cont.)	Patterns & Events	<p>Voluntary Societies - North Beach is significant for its association with voluntary societies also in response to its large immigrant population. Property types including existing residential or commercial buildings, or those constructed specifically for these purposes may be significant in relation to this sub-theme. The beginning date for the period of significance is the 1850s with no determined end date.</p> <p>Churches - North Beach is significant for its churches, which served as important centers for cultural and social activities to serve its large immigrant communities. The beginning date for the period of significance is 1849 with no determined end date.</p>
B/2	Persons	<p>The potential exists for any property to be significant for its association with important persons within each of the above subthemes. The examples listed below are not meant to all inclusive.</p> <p>Italian - For example the Bank of America Building at 1455 Stockton St. may be significant for its association with A. P. Giannini, the most prominent banker who provided the funds and lumber to Italian residents to quickly rebuild North Beach after the 1906 earthquake. Another example is the building at 270 Columbus Ave., formerly the North Beach Branch of Banco Italo-Americano, significant for its association with Andrea Sbarboro, another prominent banker who helped with the Italian rebuilding of North Beach and the founder of The Italian Swiss Colony wine organization.</p> <p>Chinese - By way of example, the building at 357 Union St. is significant for its association with Him Mark Lai, who was internationally renowned for his contribution to Chinese-American historiography and his collection of materials on Chinese-American history.</p> <p>Beats - For example, City Lights Bookstore at 261 Columbus Ave. is significant for its association with Lawrence Ferlinghetti and Peter D. Martin who co-founded the nation's first all-paperback bookstore, which became a gathering place for Bay Area writers, poets, artists, and performers in neighborhood clubs, who would eventually be known as the Beats. Another example is the apartment at 1010 Montgomery Street where Allen Ginsberg wrote much of "Howl." Other sites identified on pages 57-58 are significant for their association with famous Beats poets, writers, and jazz musicians.</p> <p>LGBTQ - For example, 440 Broadway is significant for its association with Mona Sargent, the proprietor of Mona's 440 Club, one of the earliest and most significant queer bars in San Francisco. Numerous other sites are identified in the LGBTQ Context Statement for their significance under this subtheme.</p> <p>Settlement Houses and Kindergartens - The most well-known example is the Maybeck building at 1736 Stockton St., designed by Bernard Maybeck in 1907, which is significant for its association with Elizabeth H. Ashe and Alice S. Griffith who founded the Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Center.</p> <p>Voluntary Societies - A notable example is Fugazi Hall at 678 Green St., formerly known as Casa Coloniale Italiana, significant for its association with banker John F. Fugazi, who commissioned the building in 1913 to serve the Italian community and provide space for many volunteer societies including Italian Community Services, which today owns the building and is still serving the Italian community.</p>

C/3	Architecture/ Design	Buildings of this period may be significant for their architecture as expressed by intact stylistic features, forms, construction methods, or distinctive aesthetic quality. Buildings may also qualify as an important development in the work of an architect or prominent builder. Individual resources qualified under these criteria should be examples of types and/or styles, and retain most of their original forms. For example, City Lights Bookstore (Landmark No. 228), associated with the Bohemian and Beats subtheme, qualifies under Criteria C/3. The murals at the building that housed The Paper Doll at 524 Union St. were reportedly created by North Beach artists including Emmy Lou Packard. If extant, the murals are potentially significant under Criterion C/3 for association with the development of the LGBTQ communities in San Francisco. Other examples of buildings important for their architecture include the churches Saints Peter and Paul and St. Francis of Assisi. (Landmark No. 5) associated with the Italian subtheme. This list of examples is not all inclusive.
D/4	Information Potential	Subsurface materials are potentially significant under this theme for their potential to reveal early social groups and social life in North Beach.

District

Within the theme of **Social Groups and Social Life**, there are several obvious potential districts, notably **Italians, Bohemians and Beats**, and **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ)**. Additional research would be necessary to identify boundaries for the **Bohemians and Beats** and **LGBTQ** districts. The **Italian** subtheme would probably include most if not all of the entire survey area. A district in relation to this subtheme would be one of the strongest and most inclusive in North Beach. In addition, North Beach has been recognized by the LGBTQ Context Statement as a potential historic district for the clusters of extant resources that it holds. The **Bohemians and Beats** district and **LGBTQ** district would probably be substantially less than the entire survey area. Buildings important within one of these subthemes may be important in other subthemes as well. Buildings associated with each of these subthemes may also contribute to a district under a **Neighborhood Development** theme under the combined themes of **Reconstruction from 1906-1915** and **Expansion and Infill from 1916-1941**; and the theme of **Architecture**.

THEME V: COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

Summary of Significance

Commerce. The rapid reconstruction of North Beach after its almost complete destruction in the 1906 earthquake and fire included the rebuilding of its commercial corridors in their previous locations on or near its main streets -- Columbus Avenue, Broadway, Stockton Street, Grant Avenue, Green Street, and Powell Street -- to serve the needs of the largely Italian neighborhood. Practically every store existing prior to the earthquake returned to its old location. (See page 41.) While the commercial uses have largely remained the same since reconstruction, businesses have changed to cater to the Beat and LGBTQ communities, as well as citywide customers and tourists.

Most commercial businesses were located on the ground floor of mixed-use buildings classified in other categories, including **flats, hotels, apartments, brick commercial blocks** and other building types. Right after the earthquake, a number of **one-story frame stores** were built, probably with the idea that they would be replaced with large buildings. Buildings important in the theme of **Commerce** may be significant in other themes as well.

Storefronts in North Beach all share a single historical/stylistic line, whether they occur in the brick commercial blocks, the ground floor of mixed-use buildings, or one-story wood frame structures exclusively composed of stores. In North Beach, surviving elements of the original post-earthquake era storefronts that should be preserved include brick or wooden bulkheads or bases with moldings, simple pilasters or posts between stores, vestibules, plate glass windows often held in place by copper or other metal strips with a Greek key decoration, and a short, vertically divided transom or clerestory window strip above the display window. Sidewalk lights, as described on page 150, are another feature that should be preserved, as well as neon signs described on pages 48, 87 and 160. In the pervasive remodeling of the 1930s, the bulkheads of most North Beach shops were clad in glazed ceramic tiles, usually in two colors arranged checkerboard fashion or with one as the trim, often with a row or two in zigzag pattern. These remodels are now more than 50 years old and therefore may be considered potential historic resources. (See pages 140-141.) The San Francisco Planning Department's Storefront Context Statement identifies essential historic designs, materials finishes and other character defining features of this property type.

A special case in this theme are **photography studios**, located on the top floor of buildings rather than either in the generic ground floor commercial space or on its own lot. Photography studios required unobstructed light for studio shots and outdoor space to dry prints, both of which were available only on the top floors and rooftops of buildings. Evidence of former photography studios can be seen at 201 Columbus Avenue (the former studio of J.B. Monaco), 253 Columbus Avenue above what is now Vesuvio Cafe (see Figure A48), and 271 Columbus Avenue (formerly Vitalini Fotografia Italiana in the building currently occupied by City Lights Books), identifiable by their large windows and skylights. See also pages 71-72.

Other special cases under the theme of **Commerce** are a few larger single-use buildings built during the period of expansion and infill. These include **banks**, such as those at 1455 Stockton Street built in 1928 for the Bank of Italy, now Bank of America, 270 Columbus Avenue built in 1922 for the Italian-American Bank, now occupied by a restaurant, and 580 Green Street built in 1962 for the Columbus Savings and Loan. Another example of a large single-use commercial building is the Rossi Market building at 627 Vallejo Street, constructed as a supermarket in 1932, now occupied by Cole Hardware (see Figure 97).

Private Transportation. Buildings or spaces associated with private transportation also represent a special case. Although during the period of reconstruction there were many small stables, wagon shops, feed mills, blacksmiths, bicycle shops, etc. scattered throughout the neighborhood, most of these buildings were demolished and all that survived were in new uses before 1949, as horses had been replaced by automobiles. The most notable building in North Beach related to transportation is at 721 Filbert Street, originally called the Hildebrand Stables. Constructed in 1906 as a horse stable for notorious political boss Abe Ruef, this brick structure was converted from stable to auto garage in 1924. See also pages 72-73. During the period of expansion and infill, a few commercial garages were built of brick or reinforced concrete on major streets. See also page 142.

Industry. In addition to the stores and shops that occupied the spaces that predominated on the ground floors of the main streets, buildings or spaces that housed many industries located in North Beach and at its edges may be significant under this theme. These include factories (e.g. candy, pasta, sausages, and cigars), bakeries, laundries, metal works, fish processing, marble cutting, etc. They were sometimes in simple unadorned buildings and sometimes in buildings with typical or unusual embellishments. The largest of these were located at the north end of the district: The Bauer & Schweitzer Malting Company plant (Landmark No. 129), located at 530-50 Chestnut Street (see Figure 56), and the Lewis Packing Company Vinegar and Pickle Works at Columbus Avenue and Chestnut Street (now demolished). Examples of small industrial buildings include the Delucchi Sheet Metal Works building at 1526 Powell Street (see Figure 134), the former pasta factory at 466-78 Green Street (originally the Italian-American Paste Company,

which became The Old Spaghetti Factory, Landmark No. 127), the Buon Gusto Sausage Factory at 535 Green Street, and the former Friscia Seafoods fish processor/wholesaler at both 555 Francisco Street (see Figure A8) and 557 Francisco Street (see Figure 135). The 1921 zoning law excluded many industrial uses, resulting in a transition from these uses to stores and shops. However, the departure of most of these businesses did not alter the building fabric or streetscapes. This list is not meant to be inclusive. Further research would identify other important buildings associated with this subtheme. See also pages 72-73 and 142.

Labor. Places in North Beach associated with labor history are potentially significant under this theme. Poverty and rough conditions for workers, many of whom lived in this mostly working-class neighborhood, served as a catalyst for labor organization, demonstrations, and resistance. Resources connected with labor history include locations and buildings built for other purposes, such as meeting halls, restaurants, cafes, or bars. For example, the intersection of Green Street and Grant Avenue served as a location for speakers who were members of the Industrial Workers of the World. For additional information see pages 74-75 Other sites related to San Francisco labor history could be identified through additional research.

National Register and California Register Criteria for Evaluating Significance

Criteria	Significance	Discussion
A/1	Patterns & Events	Most buildings associated with the theme of Commerce and Industry may be significant in connection with a number of patterns and events, including the rapid rebuilding following the 1906 earthquake and fire. Businesses of all kinds, including stores and workshops, were returned to their pre-earthquake locations on or near the main streets on the ground floors of most building types, whether residential or otherwise. Most commercial businesses were located on the ground floors of mixed-use buildings, or in one-story wood-frame structures exclusively composed of stores. A special case in this theme are photography studios, usually located on the top floors of buildings. Buildings or spaces that housed many industries located in North Beach could also be significant under this theme. With increasing use of automobiles, garages were built or converted from stables. During the period of expansion and infill larger single use buildings for banks, and supermarkets were built. Buildings could also be significant under this theme for their association with labor. The potential exists for any property to be significant for its association with the owners of prominent businesses, labor leaders, entertainment and cultural figures, artists, and photographers.
B/2	Persons	The potential exists for any property to be significant for its association with the owners of prominent businesses, labor leaders, entertainment and cultural figures, artists, and photographers. For example, City Lights Bookstore at 261 Columbus Ave. is significant for its association with Lawrence Ferlinghetti and Peter D. Martin who co-founded the nation's first all-paperback bookstore. 201 Columbus Ave. is significant as the former studio of J.B. Monaco, a prominent photographer. 270 Columbus Ave. and 1445 Stockton St. may be significant for their association with Andrea Sbarboro and A. P. Giannini, bankers instrumental in the rebuilding of North Beach after the earthquake. This list is not meant to be inclusive. Further research would identify others who made important contributions.

C/3	Architecture	Buildings under the theme of Commerce and Industry may be significant for their architecture under the theme of Architecture , as expressed by intact stylistic features, forms, construction methods, or distinctive aesthetic quality. Surviving elements of the original post-earthquake era storefronts, and their 1930s remodeling may be significant. Buildings may also qualify as an important development in the work of an architect or prominent builder. Individual resources qualified under these criteria should be examples of types and/or styles, and retain most of their original forms. Many examples exist, especially along Columbus Ave., Broadway, Stockton St., Grant Ave., Green St., and Powell St. Some examples include the Drexler-Colombo Building, designed by the Reid Brothers, at 1-21 Columbus Ave./612-24 Washington St., Vesuvio's Cafe (historically the Cavalli Building), designed by Italo Zanolini at 253-55 Columbus Ave., City Lights Bookstore, designed by Oliver Everett, at 261-71 Columbus Ave., the Buon Gusto Sausage Factory, designed by Martin J. Rist, at 535 Green St., and the Banco Italo-Americano, designed by Italo Zanolini, at 270 Columbus Ave. This list is not meant to be all inclusive.
D/4	Information Potential	Subsurface materials are potentially significant under this theme for their potential to reveal early information regarding this theme.

District

Within the theme of Commerce and Industry, the districts described below are identified in the 1982 North Beach Survey (see Figure 1 and Appendix B: Listed Resources - 1982 North Beach Survey). The **Upper Grant Avenue District** (centered on Grant Avenue between Columbus Avenue and Filbert Street), composed of 120 buildings, is significant under this theme because of its historical land use pattern, recreated after the 1906 fire and essentially unchanged today from the earliest development: a tightly packed area of interdependent housing and small shops serving the community with basic services. Another district identified in the North Beach Survey is the **Powell Street Shops District** (on the west side of the 1800 block of Powell Street), composed of 11 street level shops in 8 buildings, which is significant for its historical land use pattern and intact original storefront elements. The North Beach Survey also identifies a concentration of commercial brick block buildings as the **Jackson Square Historic District Extension** (on the south side of Broadway between Sansome and Kearny), composed of 22 buildings, significant for its similarity to the adjoining Jackson Square Historic District in building type, material, scale, style and historical use, and containing a few buildings which appear to date before 1906. In addition, the North Beach Survey identifies the **Washington Square District** containing approximately 12 buildings with commercial uses on the ground floors. Although further research would identify a larger, more inclusive commercial district incorporating all of the neighborhood's commercial corridors, most of the commercial buildings in North Beach may qualify as contributors to the theme of **Reconstruction 1906 to 1915** and **Expansion and Infill 1916 to 1941**, or the combined theme of **Neighborhood Development**.

THEME VI: ENTERTAINMENT AND VICE

Summary of Significance

In North Beach, the line between entertainment and vice has shifted over time, and it has not always been clear where the line was drawn. Places primarily for entertainment and places for vice have often served both sides of this line. The proximity of North Beach to the infamous "Barbary Coast" — Pacific Avenue east of Columbus Avenue — long contributed to the presence of vice in North Beach. For a more detailed history of entertainment and vice in North Beach see pages 75-83.

Many sites associated with the theme of **Entertainment and Vice** are in buildings or spaces occupied by commercial businesses, including **restaurants and saloons** where **gang** activity, **gambling and confidence games** may have taken place, or in hotels and lodging houses where **prostitution** took place. Other structures were built for specific purposes, such as **theaters, ball courts, amusement and dance halls**.

As it has been historically, the core of entertainment activities is located on the main streets -- Columbus Avenue, Broadway, Grant Avenue, Stockton Street, Green Street, and Kearny Street -- with a particular concentration along Broadway, known for its strip clubs, night clubs and bars.

Prominent examples of the numerous clubs and restaurants that existed on Broadway include Garibaldi Hall (1906) at 435-443 Broadway, originally a fraternal hall (see pages 63-64 for more information), and subsequently various night clubs, the most famous of which were the Mabuhay Gardens restaurant and night club in the 1970s; Finnochio's nightclub and bar (1936-99) at 506 Broadway, which started out as a speakeasy and after Prohibition became famous for its cross-gender performances; Enrico's Restaurant (1959-2006) at 504 Broadway, and the Jazz Workshop at 473 Broadway, where Miles Davis, James Moody, John Coltrane, and other famous musicians performed. In October 1961 comedian and cultural critic Lenny Bruce was infamously arrested here by the San Francisco Police Department for obscenity during his performance at the Jazz Workshop (now Monroe nightclub). While the particular businesses on these streets have changed over time, the buildings that housed them are still extant and the uses have remained the same. This list of places is not intended to be all-inclusive.

North Beach is significant for having the highest concentration of existing historic bars, restaurants and clubs in the City, including many listed by San Francisco Heritage as Legacy Bars and Restaurants. These include the following businesses with their original dates: Bimbo's 365 Club (1931) at 1025 Columbus Avenue; Columbus Cafe (1936) at 562 Green Street; Caffè Sport (1969) at 574 Green Street; Caffè Trieste (1956) at 601 Vallejo Street; Fior d'Italia, (1886) at 2237 Mason Street, formerly at 601 Union Street; Gino & Carlo (1942) at 548 Green Street; La Rocca's Corner (1934) at 957 Columbus Avenue; Mario's Bohemian Cigar Store (1971) at 566 Columbus Avenue; Mr. Bing's (1967) at 201 Columbus Avenue; The Northstar Cafe (1882) at 1560 Powell Street; Original Joe's (1937) at 601 Union Street; Original U.S. Restaurant (late 1890s) at 414 Columbus Avenue, formerly at 431 Columbus Avenue and then at 515 Columbus Avenue; The Saloon (1861) at 1232 Grant Avenue; Savoy Tivoli (1907) at 1434 Grant Avenue; Sodini's Green Valley Restaurant (1906) at 510 Green Street; Spec's Twelve Adler Museum Cafe (1968) at 12 Saroyan Place; Tommaso's Restaurant (1935) at 1042 Kearny Street; Tony Nik's (1933) at 1534 Stockton Street; Tosca Cafe (1920) 242 Columbus Avenue; Vesuvio Cafe (1948) at 255 Columbus Avenue; and Caffè Sapore (1996) at 790 Lombard Street. This list of places is not intended to be all-inclusive.

In addition to those mentioned above, places of entertainment venues in North Beach significant to **LGBTQ** history are listed in the LGBTQ Context Statement. See pages 59-60 for more information. Sites significant to the **Bohemians and Beats** are referenced on pages 56-58.

During Prohibition (16 January 1920 to 23 March 1933) the saloons were closed but speakeasies flourished all over town. North Beach is significant for its concentration of popular speakeasies. Examples of surviving buildings where speakeasies existed include the Hotel d'Oloron at 53-55 Columbus Avenue and The Silver Slipper at 1512 Stockton Street in the basement of what is now the North Beach Restaurant. See page 78.

Due to its proximity to the Barbary Coast, North Beach had a high concentration of places of prostitution, primarily located in the Kearny Street area and the alleys of Hinckley and Pinkney Place (now Fresno and Romolo, respectively). They were located in hotel rooms, dwellings, boarding houses, and cheap lodging houses called "cribs," like that at 14-18 Osgood Place. A movement against prostitution led to the Red Light Abatement Law of 1913. Even after open prostitution became illegal, it remained a significant activity in

the area at least to the end of World War II. Extant examples of lodging houses in which prostitution took place are 549-51 Vallejo Street/54 Romolo Place and 75 Fresno Street. See pages 79-81.

Buildings associated with **gang** activity, **gambling and confidence games** are significant in North Beach in connection with the congregation of Italian “bunko” men, the Sicilian organized criminals called the Forty Strong, and mafioso groups attracted by the flow of illegal alcohol in North Beach during prohibition. Examples include 544 Broadway (now 546-54 Broadway), a place known for the congregation of gambling or Italian “bunko” men in 1913, and a gangster hangout at 720 Columbus Avenue (extant). See pages 81-83.

With the introduction of motion pictures around the turn of the century, a proliferation of types of **theaters** emerged in North Beach. Although many can be seen on early Sanborn maps following the earthquake, most have been demolished or their uses have changed. Social and fraternal halls in North Beach sometimes served as theaters. A surviving example is Fugazi Hall at 678 Green Street (1912), which originally played host to Italian music concerts and opera performances, and was the venue for Beach Blanket Babylon from 1974 to the end of 2019. See pages 75-76.

National Register and California Register Criteria for Evaluating Significance

Criteria	Significance	Discussion
A/1	Patterns & Events	Buildings associated with the theme of Entertainment and Vice may be significant in connection with a number of patterns and events. Among the events significant to the presence of vice is the proximity of North Beach to the Barbary Coast, a district born during the California Gold Rush of 1849, marred by persistent lawlessness, gambling, administrative graft, vigilante justice, and prostitution. After the earthquake of 1906 prostitution appears to have increased in North Beach itself (as distinct from the Barbary Coast). Buildings were built or used as houses of prostitution until a social movement against prostitution led to the Red Light Abatement Law of 1913 making prostitution illegal. However, it remained a significant activity in the area at least to the end of World War II. As it has been historically, the core of entertainment activities (restaurants, clubs and saloons) is located in mixed-use buildings on the main streets, with a concentration along Broadway, known for its strip clubs. During Prohibition (16 January 1920 to 23 March 1933) the saloons were closed but speakeasies flourished in less conspicuous locations. The line between entertainment and vice has shifted over time, and has often served both. Many examples of buildings associated with this theme are listed above. Buildings associated with this theme may also be significant in connection with restaurants, clubs, bars or other venues that catered to the Bohemians and Beats and LGBTQ community.

Criteria	Significance	Discussion
B/2	People	The potential exists for any property to be significant for its association with Entertainment and Vice . Likely types of persons who may be significant are performers or proprietors associated with specific places of entertainment, as noted on page 170. For example, Miles Davis, James Moody, John Coltrane, and other famous musicians performed at the Jazz Workshop at 473 Broadway, where the comedian Lenny Bruce was arrested by the San Francisco Police Department for obscenity during his performance. Others who made important contributions may not have been previously recognized. This list of examples is not intended to be all inclusive.
C/3	Architecture	Buildings under the theme of Entertainment and Vice may be significant for their architecture as expressed by intact stylistic features, forms, construction methods, or distinctive aesthetic quality. Buildings may also qualify as important developments in the work of an architect or prominent builder. Individual resources qualified under these criteria should be examples of types and/or styles, and retain most of their original forms. Examples are Fugazi Hall at 678 Green St. (1912) designed by Italo Zanolini, and Vesuvio's Cafe at 253-55 Columbus Ave. (1913 & 1919), also designed by Italo Zanolini. This list of examples is not intended to be all inclusive.
D/4	Information Potential	Subsurface materials are potentially significant under this theme for their potential to reveal early information regarding Entertainment and Vice in North Beach.

District

Today, the core of entertainment activities is located on the main streets -- Columbus Avenue, Broadway, Stockton Street, Grant Avenue, Powell Street, and Green Street -- with a concentration along Columbus Avenue and Broadway extending into the old Barbary Coast along Pacific Avenue outside the North Beach survey area.

Contributors to a district under this theme could include buildings or spaces occupied by commercial businesses, including **restaurants and saloons** where **gang** activity, **gambling and confidence games** may have taken place, as well as structures built for specific purposes, such as **theaters, ball courts, amusement and dance halls**.

Although further research may identify a district under the theme of **Entertainment and Vice**, most buildings within the entertainment corridors of North Beach would qualify as contributors to a North Beach district under other themes.

THEME VII: INFRASTRUCTURE

Summary of Significance

While it is not clear whether any infrastructure systems or elements of those systems would be individually significant, they are features of the landscape and should be considered in the identification of historic districts. Among elements of these systems that may be contributing features of a historic district are the

following: **Street Plan, City Monuments, Block Subdivisions, Street Paving, Sidewalks, Sidewalk Lights, Curbs, Streetlights, Staircases in Public Rights-of-Way, Water Lines, Auxiliary Water Supply System, Gas Lines, Electricity, Sewers, Cast Iron Utility Covers, and Street Clocks.** For a detailed discussion of these infrastructure systems and elements, see pages 25, 84 and 146-154. Research may be necessary to further identify and describe contributing resources associated with this theme.

District

There is not likely to be a separate district in relation to the **Infrastructure** theme. However, many if not all of the infrastructure systems and elements identified in this theme may be contributors to any districts identified in relation to any other themes.

THEME VIII: PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS

Summary of Significance

There are two **Parks and Playgrounds** in North Beach. Washington Square (Landmark No. 226), mapped as one of the original three public squares in the Jasper O'Farrell survey of 1847, has served as the neighborhood center of North Beach for almost 170 years. In fact, of the three urban parks shown in the 1847 survey, only Washington Square remains intact (see Figure 138).

Joe DiMaggio Playground, formerly the North Beach Playground (see Figure 92), is a historic feature of North Beach that may be individually significant or may include elements that are individually significant. An issue in evaluating the playground, would be integrity in relation to the period of significance.

These Parks and Playgrounds would also be components of a North Beach historic district under various themes. In addition to its significance as an individual resource, Washington Square was identified in the 1982 North Beach Survey as a contributor to the **Washington Square District**. For more detailed information, see pages 119-120.

District

Further research would be necessary to know if Washington Square and Joe DiMaggio Playground together would be eligible as a district. However, parks and playgrounds would be components of a North Beach historic district under various themes.

THEME IX: ARCHITECTURE

Summary of Significance

All property types may be significant in the theme of Architecture, as expressed by intact stylistic features, forms, construction methods, or distinctive aesthetic quality. Those that may be individually significant would represent an innovation in the design of the type, a notable response to the building law or Tenement House law, an important development in the work of an architect, designer, or prominent builder, a rare or unique building type, or meet the criteria in some other way. For a description of the most prominent North Beach architects and designers, see Appendix A: North Beach Architects. For a detailed discussion of the architecture of North Beach, see Chapter V beginning on page 85.

As set forth in the 1982 North Beach Survey, the general architectural setting of North Beach can still be described as follows:

The physical setting of San Francisco's North Beach area possesses an overall continuity transcending its variety. This consistency results from its rapid rebuilding on previous patterns in the first years immediately after the 1906 earthquake and fire had destroyed the entire area. Clarence Edwards said in 1914 that this and the surrounding area "was the first part of San Francisco rebuilt after the great fire, and in its rebuilding it recovered all of its former characteristics, which is more than can be said of any other part of the rebuilt city" (Edwards 1914:66)

The consistency [of the architecture] extends beyond one style and embraces also scale and use. The three together go far to creating the noted superior livability of North Beach. To preserve this valuable livability it is vital to preserve the continuity of scale, use, and style.

Architecturally, several elements contribute to this consistency. Buildings, usually 18 to 30 feet wide, fill the fronts and sides of all lots. They march along the street frontages at a nearly standardized height: three stories or two and an expanded basement. On hillsides they climb in even steps, the basement or ground floor accommodating the adjustment from level. Street floors may contain small shops; upper floors are overwhelmingly residential.

Lot sizes had been set long before the fire by ordinary ownership patterns and by subdivisions of the original surveyors' "50-vara lots" (137.5 ft. by 137.5 ft.), six to a square block. The last major change in North Beach lot configuration occurred in the mid-1870s when Montgomery Avenue, now called Columbus Avenue, was cut through the rigid grid pattern of streets. So popular was the small lot that often one finds two, three or four identical adjacent buildings erected in the 1906-1910 period on what was then a single large lot. Since 1906 there have been very few lot consolidations. (Bloomfield 1982:10)

Many buildings significant in the theme of Architecture were identified by the 1982 North Beach Survey (see Appendix B: Listed Resources - 1982 North Beach Survey), and by the 2019 updated survey discussed in Chapter IX.

A few examples of buildings significant under the theme of **Architecture** include the works of Louis Mastropasqua at 510-12 Green Street, 833-37 Greenwich Street, and 2032-34 Powell Street. Additional examples include the works of Italo Zanolini at 678 Green Street (Fugazi Hall), 253-55 Columbus Avenue (Vesuvio's Cafe/Cavalli Building), and 270 Columbus Avenue (Banco Italo-Americano). Many other examples of architecturally significant buildings are referenced in Appendixes A: North Beach Architects and B: Listed Resources - 1982 North Beach Survey. Examples of rare or unique forms of architecture are the one-story frame stores at 1337-39 Grant Avenue and 309-29 Columbus Avenue.

Other North Beach buildings that may be significant in the theme of Architecture are those designed by a number of prominent modern architects identified in the San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design 1935 - 1970 Historic Context Statement (Modern Context Statement). Examples of buildings in North Beach survey area designed by these modern architects between the mid-1930s through the 1970s are listed in Appendix C: Modern Architects in North Beach. A few examples include the works of prominent architects such as Martin Rist at 535 Green Street and 470 Columbus Avenue, Hertzka & Knowles at 580 Green Street and 386-88/392-94 Chestnut Street, Szevich & Walsh at 439 Greenwich Street, and Gardner Dailey at 325-29 Lombard Street.

District

As determined by the 1982 North Beach Survey as updated in 2019, most if not all of the survey area would be eligible as a district in the theme of Architecture. This would be one of the strongest and most inclusive themes for identifying a district in North Beach.

Significant modern buildings in North Beach may also be eligible as a Modern Architecture sub-district, or as a part of a citywide thematic district. Appendix C: Modern Architects in North Beach lists currently identified Modern and Modernist buildings constructed in the North Beach survey area between the mid-1930s through the 1970s.

VIII. EVALUATIVE FRAMEWORK AND INTEGRITY CONSIDERATIONS

This section, prepared by architectural historians Katherine T. Petrin and Shayne E. Watson, discusses the evaluative framework and integrity considerations for assessing historic resources within the boundaries of the expanded North Beach survey area. See Figure 1: Map of Survey Boundaries.

EVALUATIVE FRAMEWORK

This Historic Context Statement builds on the 1982 survey and context statement by expanding the survey area and further developing the historic context themes related to the history and development of North Beach. The preceding Chapter VII provides the evaluative framework for each of the following themes in the history of North Beach, including a significance summary, period of significance, associated property types, examples of significant resources, and guidance for evaluating individual properties and potential historic districts associated with each (see preceding Chapter VII: Context Themes and Associated Resources, beginning on page 155). This historic context statement identifies the following nine themes of significance:

- Theme I: Reconstruction 1906 to 1915
- Theme II: Expansion and Infill 1916 to 1941
- Theme III: Development of North Beach After 1941
- Theme IV: Social Groups and Social Life
- Theme V: Commerce and Industry
- Theme VI: Entertainment and Vice
- Theme VII: Infrastructure
- Theme VIII: Parks and Playgrounds
- Theme IX: Architecture

Significant districts may be defined under several different themes, and individual buildings, structures, objects, and sites can be individually significant and/or contributors to several districts. The most inclusive of these themes that would best represent the significance of North Beach are as follows: the **Neighborhood Development** theme under the combined themes of **Reconstruction from 1906 to 1915** and **Expansion and Infill from 1916 to 1941**; the **Italians** subtheme within **Social Groups and Social Life**; and the theme of **Architecture**. The boundaries of each of these districts would likely include most or all of the survey area.

Under the theme of **Architecture**, a district could be identified under the subtheme of **Modern Architecture**.

Significant districts could also be identified under the **Bohemians and Beats** subtheme and **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ)** subtheme within **Social Groups and Social Life**.

In addition, buildings from any period may be individually significant for their relationship with persons important to North Beach history or for their architecture and/or design.

CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING CRITERIA AND INTEGRITY

Among the four National Register/California Register criteria (A/1, B/2, C/3, D/4) there are several

areas that require special consideration. A property qualifies under Criteria C/3 (Architecture/Design) as individually significant if it is a representative example of the types and/or styles under a development theme or represents the work of a master architect or prominent builder, and retains all or nearly all of its original character-defining features.

A property qualifies under Criteria C/3 as a contributor to a historic district if it retains most of its character-defining features and is related by design and development themes.

In order to meet local, state, and national registration requirements as a historic district, a majority of contributing properties would need to retain most of their original character-defining features, having integrity of design and materials. Contributors to a historic district need not meet as high a threshold for integrity as individual buildings.

It is very common for historic buildings to have undergone major or minor modifications over time. When considering contributor vs. non-contributor status to a district in the North Beach survey area, it is important to look at the collection of buildings and how they relate to each other on the street. When viewing buildings from this broader perspective, features such as window or cladding material are less important for determining integrity. In North Beach, one of the most distinctive features of the streetscape is the continuity of size, scale, use, and style. Therefore, massing and form of individual buildings become critical components when considering contributor vs. non-contributor status.

In order for a building to qualify as a contributor within the North Beach survey area under the **Neighborhood Development** theme (combined themes of **Reconstruction** from 1906 to 1915 and **Expansion and Infill** from 1916 to 1941) or under the theme of **Architecture**, the building should be a representative example of the building types, forms, or styles of architecture defined in this Historic Context Statement, and it must retain the following features:

- Original form and massing
- Original door and window openings and configurations
- Characteristic features from its period of significance

A building may have undergone modifications (Common Alteration are described below), but may still be considered a district contributor as long as the building retains the features listed above.

In evaluating individual examples, particular attention should be given to retention of windows, cladding materials, framing features, vertical additions, and garage insertions. However, replacement of the front door or window sash would not preclude a building from being determined a district contributor given that incompatible doors and windows can be replaced with appropriate materials and operability. A vertical addition set back from the plane of the facade would not preclude a building from being determined a district contributor provided it does not substantially alter the building form and massing. A compatibly designed garage addition would not preclude a building from being determined a district contributor.

Common alterations that may exclude a property from listing include reconfiguration of the window openings, a vertical addition not set back from the plane of the façade, or a garage addition that adversely impacts a projecting a bay, front entry, or other original elements.

A building may also be determined a non-contributor based on low levels of integrity resulting from a series of different alterations, or when a single property has had multiple eras of remodels. A property may not qualify as a contributor to a historic district if it lacks characteristics of a specific style or exhibits mediocre or low quality materials.

In general, however, lower integrity thresholds are warranted for buildings determined significant for reasons other than architecture (e.g. for their association with **Italians, Bohemians and Beats**, or **LGBTQ** subthemes within **Social Groups and Social Life**), or if the building represents an early or rare type of architecture (e.g. dwellings and cottages, one-story frame stores, or Cuneo flats). Such buildings may be eligible as district contributors or as individually eligible resources.

Lower integrity thresholds are also warranted for unique or rare resources. Buildings designed by master architects with lower integrity thresholds may be eligible as district contributors or as individually eligible resources.

As storefronts have been almost universally altered, the alteration of storefronts in mixed-use buildings would not normally result in a loss of integrity for those buildings. However, surviving elements of early storefronts would be particularly significant and should be preserved. Common elements of original storefronts include an entrance in the plane of the building or recessed slightly in a vestibule paved in tiles; plate glass windows resting on a bulkhead or short wall that may be faced in wood or tile, and embellished with elements such as thin metal framing members supporting the plate glass, often cast or pressed in the image of elements of classical orders; transom windows above plate glass display windows and doors, sometimes wood and glass, occasionally metal with prism glass or other special glass; and awnings over the storefronts.

In the late 1930s, in response to Saints Peter and Paul Church's call for modernization to impress visitors to the Golden Gate International Exposition, many existing buildings were remodeled with new stucco walls and Moderne ornamentation, and storefronts with brighter tile facings on the bulkheads under display windows. While these modifications may result in a loss of integrity in relation to the theme of **Reconstruction**, they may have integrity in relation to the themes of **Expansion and Infill**, and the **Italian** sub-theme.

The remodeling of facades after World War II with stucco or other new siding material and aluminum windows may result in a loss of integrity in relation to the themes of **Reconstruction, Expansion and Infill**, and **Architecture**. However, for example, if a cafe in such a building were of significance in relation to the **Beats** or **LGBTQ** sub-themes during or after the remodeling, the change would not cause a loss of integrity. Instead, the altered facade may be a character-defining feature.

While many postwar alterations may be reversible, care should be taken not to reverse alterations that themselves may be character-defining features of properties with later periods of significance, such as properties significant in association with history of the **Beats** or the **LGBTQ** community.

Depending on the nature of the property's significance, changes in use that involve alterations to the building after a period of significance could result in a loss of integrity. However, a different use alone would not result in diminished integrity.

COMMON ALTERATIONS

Described below are common alterations seen in the North Beach survey area to be considered when determining individual significance or contributor vs. non-contributor status to a district. Alterations are grouped by whether they are reversible or not, with irreversible alterations listed first. An irreversible alteration would not necessarily disqualify a building for contributor status, but these alterations should be considered with more weight than alterations that can be reversed over time. Buildings with significant alterations should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, weighing all considerations, and when considering contributor vs. non-contributor status to a district should not be viewed as a single resource, but rather as a component of the larger streetscape. If a building is significant for reasons other than architecture,

alterations would be less critical in determining status.

Irreversible Alterations

New Additions

- Compatible Additions:
 - **Additions** that have occurred within a period of significance do not result in a loss of integrity and are part of the historic fabric of a resource.
 - **Additions** made after a period of significance may not result in a loss of integrity if they do not substantially alter building form and massing and respect the scale, materials, and workmanship of the originally structure.
 - **Vertical additions** that are set back from the plane of the facade and designed to minimize their visibility from the street may not result in a loss of integrity provided they do not substantially alter the building form and massing.
 - **Rooftop additions**, such as penthouses, roof decks, and windscreens that are set back from the plane of the facade and are designed to minimize their visibility from the street may not impair contributor status.
 - **Accessory dwelling units** that are of materials and design compatible with the existing building may not impair contributor status.
- Incompatible Additions:
 - **Vertical additions** that are not set back from the plane of the facade or substantively alter building form and massing may result in a loss of integrity.
 - **Rooftop additions** that are visible from the street and substantively alter building form and massing may impair contributor status.
 - **Accessory dwelling units** of incompatible materials and design, or that alter the original entry may impair contributor status.

Rehabilitation

- Compatible Rehabilitation:
 - Substantially **rehabilitated** properties may be considered contributors if the rehabilitation meets *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*.
- Incompatible Rehabilitation:
 - **Rehabilitations** that substantively alter building form and massing may result in a loss of integrity.

Garage Additions

Garage additions are common in the North Beach survey area because most buildings were constructed during periods that pre-date automobiles or the rise in popularity of privately owned vehicles.

- Compatible Garages Additions:

- An addition or alteration to accommodate a **garage** may not result in a loss of integrity if the new garage opening does not adversely impact a projecting bay, front entry, or other original elements.
- A garage opening inserted on a **secondary elevation** or within an existing **retaining wall** may not result in a loss of integrity.
- Ideally, the design of **new garage doors** will complement the architecture of the building. However, if this is not the case, it does not necessarily impair contributor status.
- Construction of a garage structure in a **front yard setback** may not impair contributor status if the historic building materials at the base of the building have been retained.
- Incompatible Garage Additions:
 - **Garage additions** that substantively alter building form or obscure the resource, span the entire front base, or alter the location of the original entry may impair contributor status.

Change in Use

- Compatible Change in Use:
 - Properties converted to a **new use** (e.g., residential converted to commercial or commercial changed to residential or office) may be considered contributors if the property retains sufficient integrity to convey its original use and retains the preponderance of its original form, materials, and architectural features.
- Incompatible Change in Use:
 - If the **change in use** results in a loss of character defining features so that the resource no longer retains the preponderance of its original form, materials, and architectural features, it may impair contributor status.

Reversible Alterations

Façade Cladding Replacement

- Compatible Façade Cladding Replacement:
 - Contributors should retain original **cladding** materials or similar replacement cladding. **Recladding** in another material may not impair integrity if properties retain the majority of original architectural features and ornament. Original cladding in the North Beach neighborhood includes wood siding, brick and other masonry, and stucco.
 - **Recladding** of buildings in another material within a period of significance (e.g. new stucco walls and Moderne ornamentation during the late 1930s (within the **Expansion and Infill 1916 to 1941** theme) would not result in a loss of integrity but is part of the historic fabric of a resource.
 - Typical **recladding** materials include stucco, wood shingles, asbestos, vinyl or aluminum siding, or PermaStone. Recladding would not preclude a building from being determined a district contributor given that it is possible to reverse cladding alterations made after a period of significance.
- Incompatible Façade Cladding Replacement:
 - If the cladding replacement substantively alters a building's original form, massing and key

Architectural features, the resource may lose integrity.

Window or Door Replacement

- Compatible Window or Door Replacement:
 - **Window** and **door** replacement would not impair integrity if the replacement elements conform to the original openings and sash patterns and the property still retains sufficient integrity of materials, workmanship, and feeling based on other elements of the property to convey its significance. Incompatible windows can be replaced with appropriate materials, operability and sash patterns.
- Incompatible Window or Door Replacement:
 - Openings that are significantly enlarged or altered to accommodate a new window or door that are of different dimensions than the originals, may impair contributor status.

Entry Modification

- Compatible Entry Modification:
 - Replacement of **entry** stairs, steps or landing in similar configurations and materials as the original features do not impair integrity. Entry stairs or steps are subject to greater deterioration from weathering and use, and inevitably have to be repaired during the life of a building.
- Incompatible Entry Modification:
 - Substantive restyling of **entryway** landings, stairs or steps, ornament, posts or piers may impair integrity.

Ornament Removal or Modification

- Compatible Ornament Removal or Modification:
 - Contributors should retain the majority of their **original ornament** especially at key locations such as door and window openings, entryways, cornices, and rooflines.
 - The addition or removal of ornaments, features and **architectural schemes** from later periods of construction within a period of significance is compatible if the scheme is applied consistently and comprehensively to the building. This is especially relevant in the North Beach survey area where a consistent pattern of stylistic modification occurred during the 1930s when properties were altered to reflect a range of Art Deco and streamlined styles popular at the time.
- Incompatible Ornament Removal or Modification:
 - Restyling and mixing elements and ornament from different periods are generally unacceptable and may impair integrity.

Addition of New Features

- Compatible Addition of New Features:
 - Added elements and features such as **security grilles, gates, bars and fire escapes** may not impair contributor status. In addition, these features are typically reversible.

IX. SURVEY METHODOLOGY AND FINDINGS

1982 NORTH BEACH SURVEY

Architectural historian, Anne Bloomfield, completed the North Beach Survey in 1982 with Jean Kortum and Nancy Olmsted. Bloomfield defined a survey area, prepared a historic context statement and conducted a field survey. The final survey results were reviewed and approved by OHP and included in the California Historical Resources Inventory System (CHRIS), the official compilation of all identified and evaluated historic resources in California. Of approximately 1,100 buildings and other historic resources surveyed in 1982, four districts and 212 individual buildings and resources were identified as significant. These districts and individual properties are shown on Figure 1: Map of Survey Boundaries on page 3 and listed in Appendix B: Listed Resources - 1982 North Beach Survey. The San Francisco Board of Supervisors officially adopted Bloomfield's North Beach Survey in 1999 as a comprehensive record of historic and architectural resources in North Beach.

2019 UPDATED SURVEY

This Historic Context Statement does not significantly revise Bloomfield's 1982 context statement, except to expand the survey area, and to further develop the themes that relate to the periods of significance. It also serves as a basis to identify expanded district boundaries and additional individual properties worthy of higher levels of recognition and protection, such as listing in the CRHR or NRHP, or designation as City landmarks and districts. Because of the nature of North Beach, identifying and designating one or more historic districts within the expanded survey area is especially important. It will only be through one or more districts that the historic character of North Beach will be adequately recognized and protected.

For each property within the expanded survey area, the Northeast San Francisco Conservancy has recorded basic information (assessor's parcel number, address, resource type, date of construction, original owner, architect and/or contractor, and other available information) in an Excel database. The Conservancy commissioned architectural historians Katherine T. Petrin and Shayne E. Watson to survey all properties within the boundary of the expanded North Beach survey as shown on Figure 1: North Beach Survey Boundaries on page 3.

Using the evaluation frameworks for the nine context themes outlined in Chapter VII. Context Themes and Associated Resources (beginning on page 155), and the information on each property recorded in the database, Petrin and Watson surveyed all properties visible from the public right-of-way. The properties were scrutinized for their integrity pursuant to the guidance on integrity and alterations enumerated in the text above and evaluated for individual listing in the CRHR or NRHP, or as City of San Francisco Landmarks. Additionally, the entire survey area was evaluated as a potential historic district for its association with the following context themes:

- Neighborhood Development (Theme I: Reconstruction 1906 to 1915 and Theme II: Expansion and Infill 1916 to 1941) (See pages 155-161.)
- Theme IV: Social Groups and Social Life (Italians, Bohemians and Beats, and LGBTQ) (See pages 162-166.)
- Theme IX: Architecture (See pages 173-175.)

Survey Findings

The 2019 updated survey concluded that almost the entire area included within the boundary of the expanded North Beach survey appears to be eligible for listing in the CRHR/NRHP as a historic district significant under Themes I, II, IV, and IX. The period of significance for the district is 1906-1970. Out of the 1685 properties surveyed (excludes approximately 103 structures not visible from the public right-of-way), 1391 have been identified as significant and retain the integrity necessary to convey that significance. Using this information, proposed boundaries will be determined to provide the basis for a CRHR/NRHP district and/or nomination for a City Landmark District.

Theme: *Neighborhood Development (Theme I: Reconstruction 1906 to 1915 and Theme II: Expansion and Infill 1916 to 1941)*

Period of Significance: 1906-1941

The 2019 survey findings concur with the historic context statement that a majority of properties within the North Beach survey area are eligible as contributors to a district in the theme of Reconstruction 1906 to 1915, and that, because North Beach had changed little in appearance since 1915, the themes of Reconstruction 1906 to 1915 (Theme I) and Expansion and Infill 1916 to 1941 (Theme II) should be combined as a Neighborhood Development theme for the entire period from 1906 to 1941. A district under a Neighborhood Development theme would include most if not all of the survey area and would be one of the strongest and most inclusive districts in North Beach. (See pages 155–161.)

Theme: *Architecture (Theme IX)*

Period of Significance: 1906-1970

The 2019 survey findings concur with the historic context statement that most, if not all, of the survey area is eligible as a historic district for its architecture. Along with the Neighborhood Development theme, Architecture is one of the strongest and most inclusive themes for identifying a district in North Beach. The period of significance for Theme IX: Architecture, extends from 1906 through the 1970s to capture “modernist designs for dwellings, apartments, institutional, commercial and other building types built between the mid-1930s through the 1970s.” (See pages 173-175.)

Theme: *Social Groups and Social Life (Italians, Bohemians and Beats, and LGBTQ) (Theme IV)*

Periods of Significance: differs for each group

- Italians: 1906 to 1941
- Bohemians and Beats: Beats from about 1950 to 1965
- LGBTQ: beginning in 1933 to 1965

Buildings identified as associated with Italians, Bohemians and Beats, and LGBTQ communities are generally eligible as contributors to a historic district under the Neighborhood Development theme (Themes I and II) or Architecture (Theme IX). A number of these contributors may also qualify as individually significant for their association with these social groups. The 2019 survey findings concur with the historic context statement that the Italian subtheme includes most of the properties within a district under the Neighborhood Development theme because of the association of Italians with the rebuilding of North Beach after the 1906 earthquake and fire, while properties associated with the Bohemians and Beats and LGBTQ subthemes are less than the entire survey area. (See pages 49-66 and 162-166.)

In addition to determining the eligibility of buildings within the survey area for listing in the CRHR/NRHP

as a historic district, the 2019 updated survey will provide the basis for nominating additional individual resources for listing on the CRHR/NRHP or designation as City Landmarks.

Architectural Development Patterns Documented During Fieldwork

Throughout the study area, recurring patterns of architectural development were noted during fieldwork. Some patterns are specific to the North Beach study area and some citywide. The following patterns were observed in the study area:

Pattern of Vertical Additions

Many vertical additions (of varied construction dates) are not set back from the plane of the facade, substantively altering the building form and massing resulting in a finding of non-contributor status.

Common Change in Use Pattern

Some ground floor commercial spaces (often located at corners) have been converted to residential use; the property may still be considered a district contributor if it retains the preponderance of its original form, materials, and architectural features.

Midblock Construction/Rear Buildings Not Visible From the Right-of-Way

Post-1906 construction of 1-2 story residential structures located in the center of the block behind other structures is a prevalent pattern in the North Beach survey area, perhaps the largest concentration in the city numbering approximately 103. Because most are not visible from the right-of-way, they are not possible to survey though it is well-known that many of these resources still exist.

Multiple Series of Renovations

Some historic structures have been renovated multiple times resulting in a finding of non-contributor status.

Art Deco and Streamlined Alterations circa 1939

Many buildings were modified in the 1930s resulting in a consistent pattern of alterations that are the product of a historical moment. This pattern, which is reflected across the survey area, was generated by a historical event associated with the architectural expression of 1930s streamline style and its rejection of traditional historical ornament. Because this is a common pattern throughout the North Beach survey area, these properties are generally considered district contributors if they retain the architectural characteristics of that era. The building at 1301 Stockton Street is an example of a building that would qualify as a contributor based on modifications reflecting the architectural expression of the 1930s streamline style. Likewise the four in-a-row buildings at 800-830 Greenwich Street qualify as contributors based on their streamline architectural expression of the 1930s. These changes are identified in this context statement under Theme II: Expansion and Infill 1916-1941 at pages 159-62. See also page 44-48 and pages 87-88.

Buildings Designed by Modern Architects

A few buildings appeared in the Modern Style in the mid-1930s, mostly on Telegraph Hill and the northern part of the neighborhood, as a significant stylistic exception to the large majority of buildings in North Beach. Designed by a new generation of architects, most notably William W. Wurster, Gardner Dailey, and

Miller & Pflueger, this style continued after the war through the 1970s, diminishing in the 1980s.

Unique or Rare

Lower integrity thresholds may be warranted for early or rare resources (e.g. dwellings and cottages, one-story frame stores, or Cuneo flats), buildings designed by a master architect, examples of a notable response to building laws, or meet the criteria in some other way. These may be eligible as district contributors or as individually eligible resources.

Association with Social Groups and Social Life (Italians, Chinese, Bohemians and Beats, and LGBTQ)

Some buildings may qualify as a contributor to a historic district under A/1 for their association with Italians, Chinese, Bohemians and Beats, or LGBTQ whether or not they qualify under Criteria C/3. (See Theme IV: Social Groups and Social Life at pages 162-166. See also pages 49-66.

Examples of Findings of Non-Contributor Status

- The building at 2125 Mason Street was determined to be a non-contributor because it is nondescript, it exhibits low integrity, and its style, age, date of construction are not apparent.
- The building at 731-745 Greenwich Street is an example of a non-contributor because the exterior was stripped of ornament and stuccoed, in addition to door and window alterations, and it was three adjacent buildings now combined into one.
- The building at 418-420 Francisco Street is an example of a demolition that retained just the façade with new development behind; it was determined to be a non-contributor.
- The buildings at 843-845 Filbert Street and 2018 Powell Street are examples of non-contributors because of inappropriate setbacks of a vertical addition.
- The building at 853-857 Filbert Street is an example of a non-contributor where a garage addition impacted the front entry and overall massing and feeling of the property.
- The building at 301 Chestnut Street is an example of a non-contributor because of a series of different alterations or multiple eras of remodels over time.

Examples of Findings of Contributor Status Where Lower Integrity Thresholds May Be Warranted

The following are examples where lower integrity thresholds may be warranted for buildings determined significant for reasons other than architecture:

- The building at 570-76 Green Street may qualify as a contributor to a district and individually based on significance of association with the **Beats** (The Cellar) and **LGBTQ** (Coffee Dan's and the After Hours Club) rather than architectural merit.
- The building at 524 Union Street qualifies as a contributor to a district and individually based on significance of association with **LGBTQ** (The Paper Doll) rather than architectural merit as the exterior has been remodeled various times.
- The **cottages** at 1448 Kearny Street, 7 Julius Street, and 14 Valparaiso Street and the **one-story frame stores** at 716-22 Columbus Avenue, 1337-39 Grant Avenue, and 309-29 Columbus Avenue may qualify as contributors because they represent **unique or rare** resources.

- The surviving Cuneo flats at 12-22 Edith Alley and 1154-74 Kearny Street may qualify as contributors as they are examples of a building type that is rare.
- The Bonus Houses at 351-53 Union Street and 357 Union Street may qualify individually and/or as district contributors under Criteria A/1 (pattern of development associated with North Beach reconstruction, rare building type). 357 Union Street may also qualify under Criteria B/2 (association with a significant individual, in this case Chinese-American historian, Him Mark Lai).

X. REGULATORY BASIS FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Historic resources of every sort — buildings, structures, objects, sites, and districts in North Beach — may be identified as significant at the federal, state or local level.

FEDERAL LEVEL

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 established a number of programs that deal with historic preservation at the federal and state levels. The National Register of Historic Places, maintained by the Secretary of the Interior, was created as a federal planning tool and contains a list of national, state, and local districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and culture. The NHPA also established the review process known as Section 106, in which federal undertakings must be assessed for potential impact on historic resources.

The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and National Historic Landmarks provide prestigious and widely respected levels of recognition. Resources listed on the NRHP are automatically listed on the California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR).

Both the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970 similarly require consideration of a project's effects on historical, architectural, and archaeological resources as part of the environmental review process. In 1983, the Secretary of the Interior released Preservation Planning Standards and Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties that are used nationwide and under CEQA to guide appropriate preservation strategies.

STATE LEVEL

For day-to-day purposes of planning, preservation, and environmental review, the most useful program is the CRHR. Resources that are eligible for the CRHR can be entered in the state's database of significant properties. Identification of CRHR-eligible properties is the most common way of identifying historic resources subject to review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The criteria for the CRHR are similar to those of the NRHP. To be eligible for the CRHR, a property must be evaluated in a series of steps. An eligible property must meet one of four criteria of significance:

1. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States;
2. It is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history;
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; or
4. It has yielded, or has the potential to yield, important information to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation.

In finding a property significant in relation to one of these criteria, a period of significance is identified. Then a property is eligible for the CRHR only if it possesses integrity within its period of significance. Integrity is measured in seven aspects: location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

CEQA is the foundation of environmental policy and law in the state of California, and encourages the protection of all aspects of the environment, including historic resources. Under CEQA, state and local

governmental agencies must consider the impact of proposed projects on historic resources.

LOCAL LEVEL

At the local level, there are numerous studies, mandates and guidelines pertaining to the identification, evaluation, and preservation of historic and cultural resources in San Francisco. San Francisco's commitment to retaining its historic fabric is codified in Section 101.1 of the Planning Code, which sets forth eight Priority Policies, including Policy 7: That landmarks and historic buildings be preserved.

In 1995, San Francisco became a Certified Local Government (CLG) under the provisions of the NHPA. CLGs must comply with five basic requirements:

- Enforce appropriate state and local laws and regulations for the designation and protection of historic properties
- Establish a historic preservation review commission by local ordinance
- Maintain a system for the survey and inventory of historic properties
- Provide for public participation in the local preservation program
- Satisfactorily perform responsibilities delegated to it by the state

For the highest level of protection, historic resources may be protected as city landmarks or historic districts under Article 10 of the Planning Code. In addition to properties officially designated under Article 10, the City and County of San Francisco also recognizes those properties identified as eligible resources in adopted informational historic and cultural surveys. Properties lacking official designation at the local, state, or federal levels, and also lacking documentation in an adopted informational survey, may still be considered potential resources.

FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL LISTED INDIVIDUAL RESOURCES

National Register of Historic Places

- #SG100006073 Buon Gusto Sausage Factory, 535 Green Street
- #07001469 Drexler-Colombo Building, 1-21 Columbus Avenue
- #79000535 Old Ohio Street Houses, 17-55 Osgood Place (17 Osgood Place, 43-47 Osgood Place, 55-59 Osgood Place)
- #66000233 San Francisco Cable Cars
- #10000501 San Francisco Public Library North Beach Branch, 2000 Mason Street

California State Landmarks

- #1024 Briones Rancho Site, Stockton and Filbert Streets
- #91 Telegraph Hill
- #1010 Third Baptist Church Site, 1640-44 Grant Avenue

California Point of Historical Interest

SFR-003 St. Francis of Assisi, 610 Vallejo Street

California Historic Resources Inventory

212 resources listed from 1982 Survey of North Beach (See Appendix B)

Upper Dupont Street/Grant Avenue District (121 resources) (See Appendix B)

Washington Square Historic District (24 resources) (See Appendix B)

Powell Street Shops District (7 resources) (See Appendix B)

Jackson Square Historic District Extension (22 resources) (See Appendix B)

Additional properties listed or evaluated as part of the environmental process for federal projects (HUD, DOE)

San Francisco City Landmarks

#5 St. Francis of Assisi Church, 610 Vallejo Street

#33 Columbus Tower (Sentinel Building), 916-920 Kearny Street

#121 Julius Castle, 302-304 Greenwich Street

#127 Old Spaghetti Factory, 478 Green Street

#129 Bauer & Schweitzer Malting Company, 530-550 Chestnut Street

#204 Iglesia de Nuestra Senora de Guadalupe/Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, 906 Broadway

#226 Washington Square Park

#228 City Lights Bookstore, 261 Columbus Avenue

#237 Drexler-Colombo Building, 1-21 Columbus Avenue and 612-624 Washington Street

#287 Paper Doll, 524 Union Street

Here Today

p. 58 920 Kearny Street, Columbus Tower

p.59 1736 Stockton Street, Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Association

p.59 610 Vallejo Street, Church of St. Francis of Assisi

p.258 273 Chestnut Street, house

p.260 253-255 Columbus Avenue, Vesuvio Cafe

p. 266 566 Filbert Street, house

p. 266 666 Filbert Street, Church of Saints Peter and Paul

p. 266 727-729 Filbert Street, stable (Note: Correct address is 721 Filbert)

p. 269 678 Green Street, Fugazi Building

p. 269 743 Green Street, house

- p. 269 745-751 Green Street, apartment
p. 270 659 Greenwich Street, house (Note: Address is now 659B Greenwich)
p. 280 1657-1659 Mason Street, house
p. 280 1934-1938 Mason Street, flats

San Francisco Legacy Business Registry

Bimbo's 365 Club (1931) at 1025 Columbus Avenue
Caffe Sapore (1996) formerly at 790 Lombard Street
Caffe Sport (1969) at 574 Green Street
Caffe Trieste (1956) at 601 Vallejo Street
City Lights Booksellers and Publishers (1953) at 261 Columbus Avenue
Cole Hardware (1920s) at 627 Vallejo Street
Columbus Cafe (1936) at 562 Green Street
Fior d'Italia, (1886) at 2237 Mason Street, formerly at 601 Union Street
Gino & Carlo (1942) at 548 Green Street
Gypsy Rosalie's Wigs and Vintage (1960) 1457 Powell Street
La Rocca's Corner (1934) at 957 Columbus Avenue
Liguria Bakery (1911) at 1700 Stockton Street
Macchiarini Creative Design & Metalworks (1948) at 1544 Grant Avenue
Mario's Bohemian Cigar Store (1971) at 566 Columbus Avenue
Mr. Bing's (1967) at 201 Columbus Avenue
The Northstar Cafe (1882) at 1560 Powell Street
Original Joe's (1937) at 601 Union Street
Original U.S. Restaurant (late 1890s) at 414 Columbus Avenue, formerly at 431 Columbus Avenue
S & S Grocery (1959) at 1461 Grant Avenue
The Saloon (1861) at 1232 Grant Avenue
Savoy Tivoli (1907) at 1434 Grant Avenue
Sodini's Green Valley Restaurant (1906) at 510 Green Street
Spec's Twelve Adler Museum Cafe (1968) at 12 Saroyan Place
Tommaso's Restaurant (1935) at 1042 Kearny Street
Tony Nik's (1933) at 1534 Stockton Street
Tosca Cafe (1920) 242 Columbus Avenue
Vesuvio Cafe (1948) at 255 Columbus Avenue
Yuet Lee Restaurant (1977) at 1300-08 Stockton

XI. RECOMMENDATIONS

INTRODUCTION

In addition to those already listed or identified listed above in Chapter X, the 2019 updated survey identified many additional properties in the North Beach survey area that appear eligible for listing as local landmarks or landmark districts, as well as listing in the National Register of Historic Places. As a matter of practice in recent years, City Landmark properties have met the National Register criteria; properties listed on the National Register are automatically listed on the California Register. The following recommendations are intended to inform decision-makers and community members about next steps to protect and interpret historic properties in North Beach.

DESIGNATE A NORTH BEACH HISTORIC DISTRICT

As detailed in Chapter IX of this Historic Context Statement, the 2019 updated survey of individual resources concluded that almost the entire area within the expanded survey area (See Figure 1: Map of Survey Boundaries on page 3) is eligible for listing in the CRHR/NRHP as a historic district significant under the themes developed in this context statement. Using this information, proposed boundaries will be determined to provide the basis for the nomination of a CRHR/NRHP district and/or a City Landmark District. The National Register eligible districts identified in the 1982 North Beach Survey (see Appendix B: Listed Resources - North Beach Survey) would be included within the expanded district boundaries.

Although many individual properties appear to be significant, even if every one of these individual properties were made a City Landmark but no district was created, the significant historic character of the neighborhood would not be recognized or protected. This also means that the loss of any contributing structure in the district erodes the character and significance of the district. Like most of the best-known historic districts throughout the United States, the essential historic character of North Beach is not expressed in its individual buildings but in the cumulative impact of the whole. This is especially true because of the prevailing uniformity of the height and scale of the buildings in North Beach. This essential character, including the consistent height, scale, materials, and styles are rooted in the construction of most of the district in a short period of time. The loss or inappropriate modification of typical buildings in the district would quickly erode the character and quality of the district and diminish the value of the whole and the value of other individually significant buildings. The saying that a district is more than the sum of its parts is particularly true of North Beach. The reverse of this is also true, that the loss of relatively ordinary contributing buildings will have an inordinately negative effect on the character of the whole.

DESIGNATE INDIVIDUAL RESOURCES

Based on the results of the 1982 Survey together with the findings of the 2019 updated survey, the City in conjunction with community members could pursue the registration of individual properties associated with the themes contained in this Context Statement as local landmarks or landmark districts, as well as listing in the CRHR/NRHP. The following is a list of individual resources identified in the 2019 updated survey that appear eligible for local landmark, or CRHR/NRHP status:

350 Broadway	John Yehall Chin Elementary School
400-06 Broadway	Golden Eagle Hotel
435-43 Broadway	LGBTQ: Mabuhay Gardens
438-48 Broadway	LGBTQ: Mona's 440, later Ann's 440

471-73 Broadway	LGBTQ: Mona's Candle Light Room; Beats: the Jazz Workshop
500-08 Broadway	LGBTQ: Finocchio's; Beats: Enrico's
527-29 Broadway	LGBTQ: Tommy's Place; Beats: Specs 12 Adler Museum Cafe
333-43 Chestnut Street	Beats: Lawrence Ferlinghetti's flat
57-67 Columbus Avenue	Orsi Building
211-41 Columbus Avenue	Residential Hotel
222 Columbus Avenue	Residential Hotel
245-47 Columbus Avenue	Beats: Discovery Bookshop
253-55 Columbus Avenue	LGBTQ & Beats: Vesuvio's Cafe
270 Columbus Avenue	Banco Italo-Americano
371-73 Columbus Avenue	Molinari Delicatessen; Liguria Hotel
408-14 Columbus Avenue	Columbus Building
420-30 Columbus Avenue	Commercial Building
444-54 Columbus Avenue	Stella Pastries, Hotel Boheme
460-68 Columbus Avenue	Residential over Commercial Building
470-90 Columbus Avenue	Commercial Building
566 Filbert Street	Residential Building
650-60 Filbert Street	Saints Peter & Paul Church
666 Filbert Street	Saints Peter & Paul Rectory
721 Filbert Street	Hildebrand Stables
940 Filbert Street	Hancock Grammar School
555 Francisco Street	A. Friscia Seafoods
1350-58 Grant Avenue	Beats: Co-Existence Bagel Shop; Coffee Gallery; LGBTQ and Beats: Miss Smith's Tea Room;
1558-62 Grant Avenue	Beats: Original publishing operations for City Lights
1653-67 Grant Avenue	Beats: Bread and Wine Mission
526-28 Green Street	LGBTQ and Beats: Anxious Asp Bar
535 Green Street	Buon Gusto Sausage Factory (National Register #SG100006073)
570-76 Green Street	Beats: The Cellar; LGBTQ: Coffee Don's
678 Green Street	Fugazi Hall
743 Green Street	Residential Building
745-51 Green Street	House with witch hat tower
1657-59 Mason Street	Residential Building
1934-38 Mason Street	Residential Building
1000-14 Montgomery Street	Beats: Allen Ginsberg apt
1526 Powell Street	De Lucchi Sheet Metal
2032-34 Powell Street	Residential Building
2190 Powell Street	Francisco Middle School
1455 Stockton Street	Bank of Italy; Bank of America
1736 Stockton Street	Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Center, Maybeck Building
601-11 Vallejo Street	Beats: Caffè Trieste

ADOPT ALTERATION AND DESIGN GUIDELINES

The use of professionally prepared guidelines based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for alterations and design in North Beach, applicable equally to individually significant buildings and contributors to a district, would greatly facilitate the process of protecting the historic character of the district. Because of the relative lack of diversity of the building stock and the prevailing uniformity of the neighborhood, this would be a relatively uncomplicated set of guidelines. Particular areas that the guidelines would address would be rehabilitation and restoration activities, alterations or replacement of doors, windows, and entries, addition of garages, modifications to storefronts, and the size, location, and design of proposed new additions and features, including roof decks, penthouses, wind screens, ornaments, etc. Such guidelines would also address the reversal of alterations made after the period of significance. The guidelines should also include changes to infrastructure. In order to protect the historic character of the district until more detailed guidelines are developed, it is recommended that the integrity considerations for common alterations set forth in Chapter VIII of this Historic Context Statement be used as guidelines when reviewing proposed alterations to individually significant buildings and contributors to a district.

MISCELLANEOUS RECOMMENDATIONS

Historic Infrastructure. As part of a proposed North Beach Landmark District, elements of historic infrastructure should be included and protected. Regardless of their status as historic resources, those elements of the historic infrastructure that survive contribute to the historic character of the neighborhood, including historic paving, sidewalks, granite curbs, sidewalk lights, staircases and associated features in public rights-of-way, street lights, utility plates (for sewer, water, and gas systems, and city monuments), features of the Auxiliary Water Supply System (hydrants, cisterns, and manhole covers), and the features of the city survey (streets, blocks, and lots).

San Francisco's Better Streets Plan, adopted in 2010, provides that if granite curbs are removed during street repairs they should be reused, either on-site or on other streetscape projects. (*San Francisco's Better Streets Plan* p. 215)

The City should expand its policies to protect the remaining historic infrastructure, in particular the historic street lights, staircases, and sidewalk lights.

City monuments, which are reference points for land surveys, are protected under DPW Order No: 182647 of 3 June 2014 because of the importance of the monuments in the identification and protection of property boundaries. According to the order, "The City's primary goal and concern is to protect and preserve those City Monuments marked with brass survey markers or similar markers, as noted on the City's Monument Mapping System. Monuments can exist in monument wells or they can be inserted directly into sidewalks and/or other permanent locations." (San Francisco Department of Public Works 2014)

Legacy Businesses. The Legacy Business Project is a registry of important, long-time businesses whose retention is important to the preservation of San Francisco's culture and history. Places of business that provide goods and services create some of the critical elements in any social or cultural community. To honor and preserve establishments that "possess distinctive architecture or interior design, and/or contribute to a sense of history in the surrounding neighborhood," additional North Beach businesses should be identified and included in the registry.

AREAS REQUIRING FUTURE WORK

In addition to the goals and strategies identified above, unfinished business in this historic context will need continuing attention. First, because the west boundary in particular of North Beach is imprecise — North Beach merges into Russian Hill without a clear demarcation — it will be important to monitor survey and preservation efforts on that side and adjust the west boundary of North Beach if necessary.

Second, the historic context statement and the survey should be revisited and revised periodically to account for new information and perspectives. For example, four aspects of North Beach barely touched on here are the role of tourism in the neighborhood, the history and role of contractors, the history of neighborhood action, and the history of neon signs. A thorough survey of the surviving historic neon signs in North Beach should be conducted, and their preservation and restoration undertaken in conjunction with San Francisco Neon.

Future consideration may be appropriate to determine the potential significance of the remodelling that began after 1941 following the Depression years and World War II. During this period the need for maintenance and repairs resulted in wood buildings being reclad with new, inexpensive materials such as stucco, asbestos, vinyl, or aluminum siding and replacing wood windows with aluminum sash, etc. (See “The Development of North Beach After 1941” at pages 48-49.)

While identifying individual sites of significance for their associations with some social groups — Beats and LGBTQ communities — may be straightforward, it will require additional research and thought to identify districts for designation. Consideration should be given to the development of thematic historic districts to allow for the possibility of documenting resources that are related thematically, but not located within contiguous districts. An example of this would be a city-wide LGBTQ district that includes resources from the 1930s to 1950s in North Beach and sites related to LGBTQ culture elsewhere in the City.

Additional research is necessary to fully develop the North Beach ties to San Francisco labor history. Specifically additional research should be done on the intersection of Grant Avenue and Green Street as a traditional “free speech” corner, associated with San Francisco labor history or possibly with other aspects of San Francisco social history. Additional research may identify homes of labor figures and sites associated with labor. (See pages 74-75.)

Additional research on the history and contributions of women to North Beach should be conducted. Two obvious areas of additional research would be significant persons and the uses of buildings associated with gender. In addition to those individuals already identified such as Juana Briones, Sarah B. Cooper, Phoebe Hearst, Elizabeth Ashe, and Alice Griffith others are likely to turn up in relation to churches, schools, ethnic organizations, social movements, businesses, and other areas. Apart from the contributions of individuals, additional research would illuminate patterns of the use of buildings and spaces by population groups like mothers at home, cannery workers, shoppers, shop or store keepers and workers, and prostitutes, enhancing our understanding of building types. For example, a better understanding of the roles of women in child care, house keeping, and cooking may lead to more accurate understanding of kitchens, cooking porches, basements, and rooftops.

Also, further research is needed to determine additional extant resources associated with the theme of Entertainment and Vice, including former houses of prostitution and restaurants and saloons where gang activity, gambling and confidence games may have taken place.

INCENTIVES FOR PRESERVING HISTORIC PROPERTIES

The following are some of the available incentives implemented by the City of San Francisco, State of California, and the National Park Service (from LGBTQ History of San Francisco, p. 364-365).

Landmark Designation under Article 10 of the Planning Code

Article 10 of the San Francisco Planning Code contains lists of individual buildings and districts considered historically, architecturally, or socially significant, either individually or as a contributor to a landmark district. Buildings listed under Article 10 receive specialized review and protection by the City of San Francisco. As a benefit, the buildings' owners are eligible for economic incentives to help keep their properties economically viable.

Mills Act for Designated Historic Resources

The Mills Act is one of the best preservation incentives available to private property owners to help rehabilitate, restore and maintain their historic buildings. Enacted by the State of California in 1976 and adopted by the City of San Francisco in 1996, the Mills Act allows the City to enter into a contract with owners of privately owned historic properties to ensure the rehabilitation, restoration, preservation and long term maintenance of the property. In exchange, the property owner receives a reduction in property taxes for the life of the contract.

California Historic Building Code (CHBC)

The renovation of historic buildings is often difficult when older buildings must meet the standards of modern building codes (including Uniform Building Code, City Building Code, Fire Code, Plumbing Code) whose regulations are designed for contemporary construction technologies. Application of the CHBC can provide creative solutions to achieve the health, safety and welfare requirements for these historic buildings. The measures permitted by the CHBC are more sensitive to the historic conditions of a building than standard building codes. The CHBC allows flexibility in meeting building code requirements for rehabilitated structures. Generally, building owners can enjoy substantial cost savings when rehabilitating an historic structure by using the CHBC. The Department of Building Inspection applies the CHBC, including determining which buildings are eligible.

Federal Rehabilitation Tax Incentives

The Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives program is one of the nation's most successful and cost effective community revitalization programs. There are two levels of tax incentives: 20% and 10%. The 20% Rehabilitation Tax Credit applies to any project that the Secretary of the Interior designates a certified rehabilitation of a certified historic structure. The 20% credit is available for properties rehabilitated for commercial, industrial, agricultural, or rental residential purposes, but it is not available for properties used exclusively as the owner's private residence. The 10% Rehabilitation Tax Credit is available for the rehabilitation of non-historic buildings placed in service before 1936. The building must be rehabilitated for non-residential use.

Encourage Façade Easements for Designated Historic Properties

One of the oldest strategies for historic preservation is a historic preservation façade easement. An easement ensures the preservation of a property's significant architectural and essential features while allowing the owner to continue to occupy and use the property subject to the provisions of the easement. A preservation

easement is created by deed and is typically donated or sold to a public or private preservation organization. Either the City or a qualified preservation group, such as San Francisco Architectural Heritage can hold title to the easement, which allows the property owner a one-time tax deduction and the holder has the right to review any changes to features covered by the easement.

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XIII. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: NORTH BEACH ARCHITECTS

INTRODUCTION

Of the more than 1,800 buildings in the North Beach survey area, records show that approximately 1,100 were designed by architects. Many of the others were probably designed and built by their owners. In fact many of those listed with architects were designed by contractors and builders who put their names on the building permit application in the space for an architect. Insofar as the designer of a building is its architect, this was true. However, many of North Beach's building designers were not trained or licensed architects. Some of these did not claim to be architects except on building permit applications. Some did claim to be architects and some of these were publicly exposed or cited by the State Board of Architecture. Most, if not all, of those who were not architects were competent to design the buildings they worked on, not least because the overwhelming majority of these were flats buildings whose designs were highly repetitive. A busy designer could build more or less the same design over and over — a design could be learned (or copied) by looking at any one of many buildings already built in San Francisco.

Compared to many San Francisco neighborhoods where architects were active from 1906 to 1915, the principal period of building in North Beach, North Beach architects were a distinct group. Downtown, South-of-Market, the Tenderloin, Pacific Heights, and the Richmond District, drew on a pool of architects who were educated and had licenses. Many were society figures with Anglo and northern European names who belonged to elite clubs.

In contrast, architects in North Beach were businessmen (and a very few women) and professionals whose clients were businesses, institutions, and often elite individuals. These architects were overwhelmingly Italian or Swiss-Italian in background, most worked primarily for Italian clients, and most worked almost exclusively in North Beach and other Italian districts. Most of these did little work outside of North Beach unless it was for Italian clients.

Of the 12 most prolific architects in North Beach, all had Italian or Swiss-Italian backgrounds. Most of these had offices in or near North Beach, several in the vicinity of the north end of downtown around Montgomery Street and Columbus Avenue, sometimes considered the beginning of North Beach. All spoke Italian and worked primarily for Italian clients. Of these 12, five were licensed. Two others had partners who were licensed and others had partners who were not licensed.

In fact, several North Beach architects had partners, almost none of whom were Italian or Swiss-Italian, a situation that complicates the picture presented in this historic context statement. Why did they work in these partnerships? What was the division of labor? Did Italian speakers promote business and talk to clients while non-Italians did the design work? Was one partner a seasoned veteran and the other an energetic beginner? Was one more competent in structural design and floor plans and the other in façade decoration? Did they share responsibilities? The answers may have been as varied as the partnerships. Existing research speaks directly to this in only one case, the partnership of Paul J. DeMartini and Harold D. Mitchell, an experienced licensed architect born in England, about whom the *Davis Commercial Encyclopedia* wrote: "Mr. Mitchell . . . does the architectural work, while Mr. DeMartini does the design" (Davis 1911: 227), an ambiguous statement that fails to clarify who did what.

On what basis did these architects qualify for licenses? The licensing law, administered by the State Board of Architecture only took effect in 1901. At the beginning, the board granted licenses without examination to architects who by virtue of experience, training, and reputation appeared to qualify. Most of those

granted licenses without examination had practiced locally for many years. All others were required to pass an examination administered by the Board before they were issued a license.

To acquire the knowledge to pass the exam, a few architects studied in universities or institutions before acquiring some on-the-job experience. Among North Beach architects, Louis Mastropasqua graduated from the University of Naples Royal Polytechnic School and Italo Zanolini studied at the Royal Academy of Brera in Milan. More commonly at that time, when there were few architecture schools in the United States and only one in California — the University of California School of Architecture was only started in 1901 — students of architecture learned as apprentices to established architects. Among North Beach architects, John A. Porporato apprenticed to M.G. Bugbee and Perseo Righetti apprenticed to Swiss-born architect Emile Depierre.

The most common route to the profession of architect in North Beach was by experience as a builder and contractor. Eight of the 12 most prolific designers during the reconstruction period in North Beach could make the claim that they were architects on the basis of experience as carpenters, builders, and contractors. At one extreme, Paul J. Capurro was still a teenager when he listed himself as an architect, on the basis of growing up helping his father, a bricklayer and contractor. At the other extreme, Paul J. DeMartini was noted as having taught himself architecture while working 14 years as a contractor on his own projects, and Louis Traverso first worked as a contractor on numerous buildings designed by professional architects before he claimed to be an architect.

One of the central stories in the architecture and development of North Beach is the history of flats buildings and Romeo flats. Much research needs to be done before this is thoroughly understood. However, research on these architects suggests some who may have played important roles. John A. Porporato for example, designed 22 flats before 1906 when they became the most common residential building type not only in North Beach, but in other working-class neighborhoods as well. Paul J. DeMartini may have designed more flats than anyone else. Louis Mastropasqua, Perseo Righetti (and his partners Emile Depierre and Henry Kuhl), Louis Traverso, Paul J. Capurro, and Joseph Devincenzi also designed many flats. Porporato, Devincenzi, and Traverso designed the most Romeo flats.

The sketches of these architects that follow include details about their personal and family lives in an effort to understand and illustrate how they were chosen by clients.

PAUL J. CAPURRO

Paul John Capurro (1889-1945) was born in San Francisco and lived his entire life in North Beach. In 1904 when he was not quite 15, he was listed as an “honorary graduate” and medalist at the neighborhood school, Hanover Grammar School on Filbert Street. (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 11 June 1904. p. 9) At the time of the 1906 earthquake and fire, Capurro was 17. His father, Louis, a bricklayer born in Italy who worked as a contractor in North Beach at least between 1898 and 1910, built a three flat building at 1937-1941 Mason Street under a permit issued 29 January 1907. Perhaps Paul acquired some experience working on this building because less than a year after the earthquake, at the age of 18, he was in business for himself, like others taking advantage of the high demand and shortage of labor during that period.

From 1907 to 1929, Paul J. Capurro was listed on numerous San Francisco building permit applications, 33 of them in North Beach. Although frequently listed as an architect, the records of the Secretary of State do not show that he was issued an architectural license during those years. Neither was he listed as a “Non-certificated Architect” in a list published by the *Daily Pacific Builder* in 1912. On his 1917 draft registration card, he described himself as a self-employed architectural draughtsman working at 1844 Powell Street, where he lived with his pregnant wife (and his parents). On his 1942 draft registration card, he lived with

his wife Daisy (and their children) at 3 Winter Place near the corner of Union and Mason streets.

Most of Capurro's buildings were flats in North Beach for clients with Italian names. There is no record of his having designed or built anything outside of San Francisco. Some examples of Capurro's work include 371-73 Columbus Avenue (1912) (**Figure A1**), 520-24 Filbert Street (1912), 1731-33 Mason Street (1908) (**Figure A2**), 20-22 Prescott Court (1911), 725-31 Union Street (1914), 806-10 Union Street (1908), and 1-3 Winter Street (1912).

Although his principal occupation appears to have been designing and building buildings, in the 1920 census, Capurro described himself as a draftsman in a machine shop. In the 1930 census he was an estimator for a contractor.



FIGURE A1. 371-73 Columbus Avenue (constructed in 1912).
Architect: Paul J. Capurro. Photo: Google Street View.



FIGURE A2. 1731-33 Mason Street (constructed in 1908).
Architect: Paul J. Capurro. Photo by Judith Powell.

ADOLPH CAVALLO (PARTNERS WILLIAM J. BAKER, HENRY PIZZIGONI)

Little is known about the early life and education of Adolph Cavallo (1879-1915), in part because the family could not be located in the censuses of that period. Cavallo was born in California. His parents immigrated from Italy, his father from southwest of Turin in the province of Cuneo in the region of Piedmont, and his mother from Genoa. Family members were known by both Italian and English names.

The earliest directory listing for Adolph was in 1900 when he and his family were at 433 Union Street — his father Giovanni (John), his brother Giraloma (James) who worked as a carpenter, and Adolph who was listed as an engineer at that time. In 1902, Adolph worked as a “designer” in San Francisco and lived in Oakland. In 1905, he was a draftsman in San Francisco, living in Oakland. “Draftsman” was a job title, generally indicating employment with a licensed architect, possible including training through a formal apprenticeship.

Following the 1906 earthquake, Adolph formed a brief partnership with architect Henry Pizzigoni. Enrico or Henry Pizzigoni (born 1860) came to the United States from Intra, a small town on the west side of Lago Maggiore, Province of Novara, Region of Piedmont in the Alps. Pizzigoni, a widower, arrived in New York with his son Pietro, or Peter, on 8 July 1906 on the way to San Francisco. When he landed in New York, Henry was listed as a surveyor and Peter, age 15, as a “scholar.”

Arriving in San Francisco soon after the new building law took effect in July 1906, Pizzigoni rented a house in Alameda and an office for the practice of architecture at 15 Montgomery Avenue, at the south end of North Beach. He was briefly in partnership with Adolph Cavallo, and beginning in 1907, worked on his own.

Pizzigoni continued to live in Alameda where his son was listed as a carpenter in the 1910 census. Although as a surveyor, he must have had at least some technical training and although he continued to call himself an architect, he was listed as a “Non-certificated” architect in the *Daily Pacific Builder* in 1912. He was not listed in San Francisco city directories either as a resident or an architect after 1907, but signed building permit applications as an architect and may have advertised in the Italian press.

Although Pizzigoni did not design many buildings — only seven are known in North Beach — he designed a building for one of the most important Italian institutions in San Francisco, Garibaldi Hall at 435 Broadway for the Compagnia Garibaldina di Mutuo Soccorso. In 1907 he designed a boarding house, three flats, and two apartment buildings.

By 1917 he was evidently retired from architecture, advertising in the *Oakland Tribune* for Italian or French lessons in his home at fifty cents per lesson.

In 1907-1908, Cavallo formed another partnership listed as A. Cavallo & W. J. Baker, structural engineers and architects. William J. Baker immigrated from Australia in 1902. Baker passed the exam and was granted architectural license no. 354 on 17 January 1905; in that year he had an office at 927 Market Street. After his partnership with Cavallo, in 1910, Baker worked in the San Francisco City Architect’s office. In 1907, Cavallo and Baker had an office at 417 Kearny Street in San Francisco, with Cavallo listed first as the senior partner.

After working with two partners who called themselves engineers, from 1908 to 1910, Cavallo practiced on his own, calling himself an architect on building permits, but not licensed. In 1909 he was listed in the city directory as an engineer with an office at 507 Mission Street. In the 1910 census he called himself an architectural engineer. In 1912 voter registration records, he was a draftsman living with his brother, James, a builder.

Cavallo designed 16 buildings in North Beach, five of them with partners, almost all of them flats, three of which were Romeo flats. He designed few buildings outside of North Beach and none outside of San Francisco. Most of his buildings were for Italian clients. Buildings designed by Cavallo in North Beach include 327-29 Chestnut Street (1906) (**Figure A3**), 1446-62 Grant Avenue (1909), 453-63 Union Street (1910) (**Figure A4**), 516 Green Street (1907) (**Figure A5**) and, in partnership with W. J. Baker, 152-62 Jasper Place (1907).

In July 1906, Adolph and his brother James bought a lot at 161-171 East Tenth Street in Oakland and built a residence for themselves. By 1912 they had moved to 1035 45th Street in Emeryville.

The last known buildings designed by Adolph Cavallo were in 1910. In that year he was sued for divorce by his wife, Lillian, for “failure to provide.” In 1915, Cavallo committed suicide, attributed to “despondency

due to ill health.” (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 22 April 1915, p. 8)

Looking back on his career, calling himself an engineer and designer at the age of about 21, at various times a draftsman (usually denoting employment with a licensed architect or professional engineer), and partnerships with Henry Pizzigoni (an unlicensed but apparently educated designer) and William J. Baker (a licensed architect), it is likely that Adolph Cavallo had some education in engineering and architecture. Working for a licensed architect in 1905, he may have begun an apprenticeship that was disrupted by the 1906 earthquake and fire. Or he may have had technical training at a school like Heald’s. All of this indicates that Cavallo was in a different category from Paul J. Capurro, Paul F. DeMartini, and others who were contractor-builders who designed their own buildings but had no license or professional training but called themselves architects. By comparison, although he had no license, Cavallo probably had professional training.



FIGURE A3. (above left)
327-29 Chestnut Street (constructed in 1906).
Architect: Adolph Cavallo.
Photo by Judith Powell.

FIGURE A4. (above right)
453-63 Union Street (constructed in 1910).
Architect: Adolph Cavallo.
Photo by Judith Powell.

FIGURE A5. (left) 516 Green Street.
(constructed in 1907).
Architect: Adolph Cavallo.
Photo by Dennis Hearne.

PAUL F. DEMARTINI

Paul Frank DeMartini (1880-1957) was one of a number of DeMartinis in San Francisco involved in architecture and construction including his son, Edmund P. DeMartini (1908-1983), who was an architect and member of the San Francisco Architectural Club, and another Paul DeMartini (b. 1875) a house carpenter on Octavia Street. His career overlapped with that of Paul J. DeMartini (1874-1913) [see below] who was a few years older and died much earlier. These two best known Paul DeMartinis did similar work for similar clients in North Beach only from 1911 to 1913. Before that time Paul J. DeMartini was active. After 1913, Paul F. DeMartini continued working for many years.

Paul F. DeMartini was born in California to Gerolaimo and Anna Biggio DeMartini who came from Italy in 1875. Nothing is known of his early life. After the earthquake of 1906 he lived with various family members at 2123 Powell Street until the 1920s, listing his occupation variously as carpenter, contractor, laborer, architect (starting 1913), and draftsman.

In the 1910 census, he was head of a household of ten people including his wife, Alvira (born Alvira DeMartini, probably a cousin), his father Paul R. DeMartini, and three brothers. He described himself at that time as a carpenter working in the building industry. On his draft registration card in 1918, he described his occupation as an architect working for himself. The card also noted “all fingers left hand off at knuckles” — a condition consistent with construction work.

His business prospered and by 1920 he had paid his mortgage off at 2133 Powell Street. By 1930 he and his family moved to a new residence at 948 Broadway, valued at \$10,000.

From 1911 to 1933, Paul F. DeMartini was involved as an architect, contractor, carpenter, and laborer in more than one hundred new buildings in North Beach. Most of his buildings were for clients with Italian names. While most of the buildings he designed were flats, including 374-78 & 380-82 Chestnut Street (1929) (**Figure A6**), 1864-66 Stockton Street (1915) (**Figure A7**), 1445-49 Grant Avenue (1913), 315-17 Green Street (1915), and 517-32 Greenwich Street (1912), he also designed several commercial/industrial buildings,



including the A. Friscia Seafoods building at 555 Francisco Street (1923) (**Figure A8**), and bakeries at 1501-15 Grant Avenue/510-16 Union Street (1917) (**Figure A9**) and 1831 Powell Street.

In addition he worked on houses and other buildings in scattered parts of San Francisco and in other parts of the Bay Area, in part as Italians moved to the suburbs, including Oakland, Alameda, Vallejo, Colma, San Mateo, and Los Altos. His best-known building might be the 1932 Dolphin Swimming and Boating Club next to Aquatic Park.

FIGURE A6. 374-78 and 380-82 Chestnut Street (constructed in 1929).
Architect: Paul F. DeMartini. Photo by J. G. Corbett.



FIGURE A7.
1864-66 Stockton Street
(constructed in 1915).
Architect: Paul F. DeMartini.
Photo: Google Street View.



FIGURE A8. 555 Francisco Street
(constructed in 1928).
Architect: Paul F. DeMartini.
Photo by Judith Powell.



FIGURE A9. 1501 Grant
Ave./512 Union Street
(constructed in 1917).
Architect: Paul F. DeMartini.
Photo by Judith Powell.

PAUL J. DEMARTINI (PARTNERS DEMARTINI BROTHERS, HAROLD D. MITCHELL)

Of the two Paul DeMartinis active in architecture and construction in North Beach, Paul J. DeMartini (1872-1913) appears to have been more assimilated in the mainstream of San Francisco's architectural profession. Although not a licensed architect (he was listed among "Non-certificated Architects" in the *Daily Pacific Builder* in 1912), he was in a conventional architectural partnership with Harold D. Mitchell the last three years of his life and career and he was written about in non-Italian commercial and architectural publications.

Paul J. DeMartini was born in Genoa and came to San Francisco in 1888 or 1890 with his parents, brothers, and sisters. According to the *Davis' Commercial Encyclopedia*, DeMartini "learned his profession through self education" by working fourteen years as a contractor during which time he did a great deal of designing which made him quite efficient in architecture." (Davis 1911: 227) By 1897 he was living at 1133 Pacific with his wife Rosa J. DeMartini and their son. In 1898 they moved to 459 8th Avenue, purchased with a mortgage. In 1910, the household included Paul and his wife, three sons, a niece, and two lodgers, one of them a 45-year-old Italian born house carpenter also named Paul DeMartini.

Before 1906 he was listed as a builder working from his home on 8th Avenue, sometimes working with his brothers Joseph and Frank as DeMartini Brothers, contractors. After the earthquake he opened his own office near North Beach where he would do most of his work. In 1907 he was at 69 Montgomery Avenue and from 1908 to 1913 he was at 628 Montgomery Street. From 1910 to 1913 he was joined in partnership with Harold D. Mitchell at that address. As a contractor he had built at least one building for Mitchell, a cottage on Landers Street near 14th and Mission in 1905.

DeMartini's partner, Harold D. (Duhurst or Dewhirst) Mitchell (born 1855), was an early and well-credentialed architect, a surprising associate for an Italian immigrant with no apparent institutional training. Mitchell was born in England and studied at the Art Institute of Manchester. He came to the United States in 1876 (1900 census). He worked for Wright and Sanders until he opened his own office at 217 Sansome Street in 1881. In 1882, he published an article, "Architecture in America, Its History up to the Present Time" in the *California Architect and Building News*, in which he argued for an architecture that was appropriate for its purpose and locality (p. 29). By 1884, he designed St. Luke's Church (Alexander & Heig, p. 363) in San Francisco (Gothic Revival style stone building at Van Ness and Clay, destroyed 1906), warehouses, many houses, and several buildings for the Central Gas Light Company. He was most noted for the 1890 Fiske Building in Fresno in the English Renaissance style, "considered at the time the finest commercial structure in the San Joaquin Valley" (Kirker 1973: 104). For his writing and early buildings, Harold Kirker referred to him as "The prominent San Francisco designer, Harold Mitchell" and as a leading architectural "revolutionist" of the 1880s. (Kirker 1973: 120, 129) The index to the *California Architect and Building News* for 1880 to 1900 includes more than eight pages of his work in San Francisco, most of it residential. When the licensing of architects was begun in 1901, Harold D. Mitchell was among a number of established architects who was granted a license without examination. He received license no. 129 on 16 September 1901.

Mitchell and his wife, Isabella, and children lived with her parents for more than twenty years. In the extended household of both families, the 1900 census included Harold D. Mitchell's 20-year old son Harold L., a draftsman. Harold D. Mitchell remained in the former office space of Paul J. DeMartini at 628 Montgomery Street until at least 1920, long after DeMartini's death.

In their architectural practice, the division of responsibility was described in 1911 as follows, "Mr. Mitchell . . . does the architectural work, while Mr. DeMartini does the design." (Davis 1911: 227)

From his years as a contractor to his death in 1913, Paul J. DeMartini was a prolific producer of buildings. *Davis' Commercial Encyclopedia* wrote in 1911, "He has built more small buildings in San Francisco than any other one architect." Although Davis stated, "His practice extends over all classes of buildings," (Davis 1911: 227) as noted by the *Architect and Engineer* after his death, most of his work was flats and stores (Oct. 1913, p. 143). Although he worked in scattered areas of the city, most of his work was in North Beach and he built nothing outside of San Francisco. Most of his work in North Beach was for Italian clients. DeMartini's early death at the age of about 41 (his birth year and age were variously reported) "was caused by tuberculosis brought on by pneumonia." (*Architect and Engineer* October 1913, p. 143).

Paul J. DeMartini designed more than 90 buildings in North Beach including those at 1453-55 Grant Avenue. (1907) (**Figure A10**), 25-29 Jasper Place (1910), 43-47 Jasper Place (1907) (**Figure A11**), 114-20 Jasper Place (1906), 1816-18 Mason Street (1911) (**Figure A12**), 1834-48 Mason Street (1909) (**Figure A13**), 1859-67 Powell Street (1906) (**Figure A14**), 511-15 Vallejo Street (1913), 517-21 Vallejo Street (1913), 144-48 Varennes Street (1907), and 152-58 Varennes Street (1906). Together with Harold D. Mitchell, he designed at least 4 buildings in North Beach, including 483-87 Green Street (1910) (**Figure A15**), 1950-56 Taylor Street /893 Filbert Street (1910), and 400-02 Union Street/1401-05 Kearny Street (1910). North Beach buildings designed by Harold D. Mitchell include 1315-17 Stockton Street/700 Broadway (1907), later remodelled with a new stucco facade in the Moderne Style).



FIGURE A10. 1453-55 Grant Avenue
(constructed in 1907).
Architect: Paul J. DeMartini.
Photo by Judith Powell.



FIGURE A11. 43-47 Jasper Place
(constructed in 1907).
Architect: Paul J. DeMartini.
Photo by: Judith Powell.



FIGURE A12. 1816-18 Mason Street
(constructed in 1911).
Architect: Paul J. DeMartini.
Photo by: Judith Powell.



FIGURE A13. 1834-48 Mason Street
(constructed in 1909).
Architect: Paul J. DeMartini.
Photo by: Judith Powell.



FIGURE A14. 1859-67 Powell Street (constructed in 1906).
Architect: Paul J. DeMartini.
Photo by: Judith Powell



FIGURE A15. 483-87 Green St. (constructed in 1910).
Architects: Paul J. DeMartini and Harold D. Mitchell.
Photo by: Judith Powell.

JOSEPH DEVINCENZI (PARTNER DEVINCENZI BROTHERS & COMPANY)

Joseph Devincenzi (1879-1936) was born in Amador County where his father was a gold miner. His father Domenico and his mother Julia came from Italy in 1869 and 1873, respectively. Joseph was the oldest of five brothers, also including Antonio or Antone J. (born 1881), Frank (born 1884), Angelo J. (born 1885), and Claude L. (born 1887). The year after Joseph was born, in 1880, his father was unemployed for three months. In 1900, Joseph and Antonio worked in placer mining with their father. Sometime after 1900, the boys' mother died and some of the family moved to San Francisco; Frank appears to have gone back and forth between Amador County and San Francisco. At the time of the 1910 census, Domenico owned a gold mine in Amador County, his son Frank worked for him, and his youngest son Claude was still in school.

In 1909, Joseph, Frank, and Angelo were all living in a hotel at 432 Broadway in San Francisco, Joseph and Angelo working as carpenters. After a couple of years in different jobs, living at different locations, in 1912 they formed Devincenzi Brothers & Company, "contractors," with Joseph, Angelo, and Antonio, and a carpenter named John Fredericks, living and working out of 1069 Union Street.

In 1913, the directory listed Devincenzi Brothers & Company, "designers and builders," with Joseph, Angelo, and Frank together with J. Fredericks. The business and Joseph's residence stayed at 1069 Union Street while Angelo and Frank lived with their father at 128-130 Macondray Lane.

In 1914, Devincenzi Brothers & Company, "builders" included Joseph, Angelo and Frank with J. Frederick at 1069 Union, Joseph's residence. Domenico and Claude lived at 130 Macondray Lane with Antonio and his wife Mary. Although Antonio was listed as a carpenter, he was not listed as part of the business. Everything was the same in 1915 except that Frank moved to Oakland.

In 1916, only Joseph was listed with Devincenzi Brothers & Company, still at 1069 Union where Joseph now lived with his wife Lillian. When he registered for the draft in 1918, Joseph stated that he had a “defective eye.”

Beginning in 1917, Devincenzi Brothers & Company was no longer listed, but Joseph Devincenzi, contractor, remained at 1069 or 1071 Union Street for many years. By 1930, he was a contractor living in his own home at 1221 Vallejo Street, worth \$10,000. By 1933, he was no longer listed as a contractor.

Joseph Devincenzi and Devincenzi Brothers & Company were active designers and builders in North Beach from 1908 to 1924, during which time they were associated with the construction of 38 buildings. Although neither Joseph nor any of his brothers were ever licensed architects, Joseph was often listed as the architect on building permit records.

Thirty-seven of their forty-one buildings were flats, eight of them Romeo flats. One flats building was built for Angelo Devincenzi, the second brother and partner in the business. In addition, they designed one dwelling and one apartment building. Almost everything they were associated with was for Italians in North Beach. Nothing was outside of San Francisco.

Some examples of Joseph Devincenzi’s work include 800-04 Filbert Street/1901-11 Mason Street (1909) (**Figure A16**), 383-89 Green Street (1913), 525-31 Greenwich Street (1914) (**Figure A17**), 2124 Mason Street (1911), 407 Vallejo Street (1910), and the three buildings located on the lot at the corner of Francisco and Mason Streets, including 2252-56 Mason Street (1910) (**Figure A18**), 2258-62 Mason Street/495 Francisco Street (1910), and 483 Francisco Street (1910) .

This sketch of Joseph Devincenzi is presented with many details of his work and living locations and relationships derived from directories, census records, and draft records in order to distinguish him and his brothers from other Devincenzis doing similar work in overlapping time periods. For example, Caesar Devincenzi was a contractor in 1909; James Devincenzi was a carpenter in 1909; Louis Devincenzi was a carpenter in 1909 and continued as a contractor for many years; John Devincenzi was a carpenter in 1910; Alfred Devincenzi was a bricklayer in 1915; Antonio Devincenzi was a framing contractor in 1918; and Attilio Devincenzi was a contractor in 1936.



FIGURE A16.
800-04 Filbert Street/
1901-11 Mason Street
(constructed in 1909).
Architect: Joseph Devincenzi.
Photo by Judith Powell.



FIGURE A17. 525-31 Greenwich Street (constructed in 1914).
Architect: Joseph Devincenzi.
Photo by Judith Powell.



FIGURE A18. 2252-56 Mason Street (constructed in 1910).
Architect: Joseph Devincenzi.
Photo by Judith Powell.

CHARLES FANTONI

Charles Fantoni (1872-1933) was born in the Italian speaking region of Switzerland and came to the United States in 1889 and to San Francisco by 1893.

For many years he lived and worked in North Beach, first with his wife Louisa running a laundry and then as a marble cutter. At the time of the 1900 census he stated that he had been unemployed for three months in the previous year, perhaps leading him to seek supplementary work. In 1905 the Fantonis sold “delicacies” in a shop on Montgomery Street. Also in 1905, he was listed as an architect in a contract notice for flats on Green Street near Powell. He was listed as an architect in the 1907 city directory and in the 1910 census. Following successful completion of the exam, he received his architectural license 1 July 1911 (no. 662).

From 1907 to his death in 1933, Fantoni designed 52 buildings in North Beach. Most of his buildings were flats but he designed a variety of other types as well, including stores, stables, garages, and apartments. By far his largest and best-known projects were the church and school of Saints Peter and Paul on Washington Square (see Figure 36). Other buildings designed by Fantoni in North Beach include 735-41 Green Street (1919) (**Figure A19**), 760-66 Green Street (1907) (**Figure A20**), 1934-38 Mason Street (1907) (**Figure A21**) (see also Figure 79 for building plans), 1700-04 Stockton Street/584-86 Filbert Street (1915) (**Figure A22**), 776 Union Street (see Figure 76 for building plans), and 471-77 Vallejo Street (see Figure 106 for photo and Figure 83 for building plans). Most of Fantoni’s clients were Italian and at least half of his buildings were in North Beach, although he designed many in the Mission District and others in scattered Northern California cities including Oakland, Redwood City, Millbrae, Los Banos, San Anselmo, Santa Clara, Watsonville, San Bruno, and Colma.

Louisa died in 1916 and Charles Fantoni died in a car crash in 1933.



FIGURE A19. 735-41 Green Street (constructed in 1919).
Architect: Charles Fantoni.
Photo by Judith Powell.



FIGURE A20. 760-66 Green Street
(constructed in 1907).
Architect: Charles Fantoni.
Photo by Judith Powell.



FIGURE A21. 1934 Mason Street
(constructed in 1907).
Architect: Charles Fantoni.
Photo by Judith Powell.



FIGURE A22. 1700-04 Stockton Street/584-86 Filbert Street (constructed in 1915).
Architect: Charles Fantoni.
Photo by Judith Powell.

LOUIS MASTROPASQUA (PARTNER WILLIAMS BROTHERS)

Louis Mastropasqua (1870-1951) was born in the Province of Brescia, Region of Lombardy, Italy. He studied civil engineering and architecture at the University of Naples Royal Polytechnic School, graduating in 1899.

In 1902, Mastropasqua arrived in Seattle from Yokohama with an international troupe of musicians with whom he had traveled through Egypt, India, Java, Australia, and Japan. Louis Mastropasqua was the only one in the group of five who was not a musician but had gone along as a chaperone for his sister or cousin “Miss Mastropasqua,” a lyric soprano who had graduated from the Conservatory of Music in Naples and had performed there at Bellini’s Opera House. (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 5 December 1902, p. 2)

A skilled cartoonist for the Italian press in San Francisco, the *Davis Commercial Encyclopedia* described Mastropasqua as “among the leading newspaper artists in California” in 1911. (Davis 1911: 174)

From the beginning of his life in San Francisco, Mastropasqua was involved in social activities that may have brought clients to him in his work. In 1903, he was among the founders of the local branch of the Italian Touring Club, along with the Italian vice-consul, Ettore Patrizi editor of *L’Italia*, and the pianist Carlo Gentile with whom he had toured the world on his way to the United States. The club bicycled to the top of Mt. Tamalpais in September 1903. (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 28 September 1903, p. 12)

Mastropasqua worked for William Curlett in 1903-1904, when the projects in Curlett’s office included The Shreve Building at Post and Grant and the Ede Building on Market Street between Sixth and Seventh Streets. In 1905 he established his own practice at 604 Montgomery.

Displaced by the earthquake and fire, Mastropasqua formed an association with Williams Brothers, Engineers and Building Superintendents within ten days after the fire went out. They were temporarily located in Oakland and at 1411 Post Street, San Francisco. In advertisements beginning 29 April 1906 and continuing until 26 February 1907 or later, at a time of inflated prices, they promised: “We build at actual cost of material and labor” (*San Francisco Call*, 26 Feb. 1907, p. 10) and “Reasonable Charge for Services.” (*San Francisco Call*, 6 May 1906, p. 16) Walter M. and Charles Williams described themselves as “designing and constructing engineers.” (1908) and as contractors with E. F. Henderson (1910).

Mastropasqua also advertised in the Italian press. When he resumed practice on his own, he moved his office to be near North Beach at 580 Washington Street, where he remained until after 1937 when he went to work for the Capital Company — a subsidiary of Transamerica that built the Western Furniture Exchange on Market Street (1937), the new Bank of America headquarters at 300 Montgomery Street (1941), and “a large subdivision near Oakland” right after the war during the period of his employment. (James & James p. 489)

In November 1906, Mastropasqua was one of the ten cited by the State Board of Architecture for practicing without a license. Mastropasqua responded that “he had taken the examinations held three months ago and failed, notwithstanding the fact that he was a graduate of a prominent Italian school of architecture and had been working at his profession for the past four years” in San Francisco. “He held, however, that he was not violating the law . . . in advertising himself [if] he did not sign his plans as an architect.” (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 25 November 1906, p. 64) Among the members of the board who cited him was William Curlett, his previous employer. Subsequently, Mastropasqua passed the exam and on 8 April 1909, was granted architectural license no. 542.

With his license, Mastropasqua was entitled to attend events of the local profession, such as a banquet for Henry Hornbostel of New York, architect of the Oakland City Hall, in July 1910. (*San Francisco Call*, 23 July 1910, p. 18)

Mastropasqua designed at least 54 buildings in North Beach between 1907 and 1941, 31 of which were flats and most of which were for Italian clients. Flats include 33-35 Edith Place (1912), 510-12 Green Street (1910) (**Figure A23**), 833-37 Greenwich Street (1912) (**Figure A24**), and 2032-34 Powell Street (1912) (**Figure A25**). In addition to flats, Mastropasqua designed a wide variety of types of buildings including apartments, hotels, commercial buildings, and dwellings in North Beach. These included the apartments at 754-60 Broadway (1913), the dwelling at 476 Lombard Street (1926) (**Figure A26**), the Basque Hotel at 15 Romolo Street (1912), and the commercial building at 532-44 Columbus Avenue/1527 Stockton Street (1915). Other distinctive building types were a macaroni factory and theater, and a funeral business.



FIGURE A23. 510-12 Green Street (constructed in 1910).
Architect: Louis Mastropasqua. Photo by Dennis Hearne.

He also designed buildings in scattered parts of San Francisco and around the Bay Area including Berkeley, Oakland, Alameda, Albany, Richmond, Colma, Mountain View, Asti, Santa Rosa, San Anselmo, Pittsburgh, and Stockton.

Mastropasqua's Italian clients ranged from ordinary people who may have seen his advertisements in the Italian press to business leaders and the social elite he may have encountered through his social connections.

Mastropasqua's work was the subject of a short pictorial spread in the August 1909 edition of the *Architect and Engineer* (four months after receiving his license). This was a prestigious form of coverage that represented the approval of the local profession. The title, "Some Recent Work by L. Mastropasqua, Italian Architect, San Francisco," conveyed the idea that Mastropasqua brought something

distinctive to San Francisco from his Italian architectural education. Although many San Francisco architects were trained abroad, few were from Italy. Most Italians who became architects in San Francisco were local builders and contractors first. Of six buildings or projects shown in the article, two were in North Beach, the funeral home at 1548 Stockton Street for G. Iaccheri & Co. and the Macaroni Factory (with moving picture theater) at 415 Broadway for L. Nunziato. The funeral home was a brick building with an ornamental facade whose composition and Renaissance-Baroque stylistic detail constituted a familiar image in San Francisco. The macaroni factory and theater however was highly unusual in both its structure and its appearance. The *Architect and Engineer* called it "The First Reinforced Concrete Building Erected in San Francisco after the Fire of 1906." According to the *San Francisco Call*, "It is the claim of the residents of the Latin Quarter that they will have the first only [sic] bona fide reinforced concrete building in the city. This statement is based upon the method of erecting reinforced concrete buildings in Italy." Designed by Louis Mastropasqua, after working in San Francisco for three years before the earthquake, "it has been his consistent claim that the only building suitable for San Francisco is the reinforced concrete as used in Italy." (*San Francisco Call*, 3 October 1906, p. 16)



FIGURE A24. 833-37 Greenwich Street
(constructed in 1912). Architect: Louis Mastropasqua.
Photo: Google Street View.



FIGURE A25. 2032-34 Powell Street (constructed in 1912).
Architect: Louis Mastropasqua.
Photo by Judith Powell.



FIGURE A26. 476 Lombard St.
(constructed in 1926). Architect: Louis Mastropasqua.
Photo by J. G. Corbett.

Moreover, the architectural design of the facade, was an unusual combination of a simplified classical order adapted to poured concrete construction, and details of the Art Nouveau style, a style that was infrequently used in San Francisco.

The other buildings and projects highlighted by the *Architect and Engineer* were a Domestic Laundry Building at 2066-2078 Howard Street (now South Van Ness), the dining room in an unidentified San Francisco house, a rendering of a residence for Mr. L. Scaiena in Sausalito, and a rendering of a project for a Swiss Chalet, signed by “L. Mastropasqua, Italian Architect.” The two renderings of houses were based, in different degrees, on the architecture of Swiss Chalets, perhaps familiar to Mastropasqua from his mother’s family who was from Switzerland.

Apart from these, Mastropasqua’s best-known designs are a three-story commercial building at the southwest corner of Kearny and Commercial streets with Art Nouveau stylistic

detail, a house for Charles F. Grondona, a prominent Bank of Italy executive, at Larkin and Union streets, and Julius' Castle at 302 Greenwich on Telegraph Hill at 1531 Montgomery Street/302 Greenwich Street (**Figure A27**).

In 1907, Mastropasqua married Evelyn Cuneo (1883-1973) the daughter of Giovanni S. Cuneo who came from Italy in 1847 and worked as an interpreter (the possible relationship between the Cuneos and A. P. Giannini's in-laws has not been explored). In 1910, they owned a house at 1720 Grant Avenue, but afterwards were renters. On 16 February 1924 they left New York for eight months in Europe, leaving Southampton on 16 October 1924. They visited Italy on "family business" and traveled in France, England, and Switzerland.



FIGURE A27. Julius' Castle, 1531 Montgomery St. /302 Greenwich St., 1957.
Architect: Louis Mastropasqua (constructed in 1932).
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library (AAB-2693).

JOHN A. PORPORATO

John Anton Porporato (1877-1965) was born in San Francisco. His parents both came from Italy, his father from Pinerolo in the Province of Turin, Region of Piedmont in the Alps. His father was a baker and his brother, who was born in Italy, was a barber. The family lived in North Beach. According to the *Davis Commercial Encyclopedia*, "He received his education in the common schools of San Francisco and in the evening high school. Later he attended Lincoln drawing school and finally entered the architectural office of M.G. Bugbee." (p. 176)

As an apprentice with Maxwell G. Bugbee (1865-1927), Porporato followed the most common route to becoming an architect at the time. Bugbee's father and grandfather had been architects and the firm of S. C. Bugbee & Son (Samuel and Maxwell, father and son) was noted as one of the four principal nineteenth century firms in San Francisco that trained San Francisco architects by apprenticeship. (Kirker 1973: 90) Little research has been done on Maxwell Bugbee, but he is remembered today primarily for a number of

scattered residences, simple cottages on the one hand, and shingled houses for wealthy suburban clients on the other.

After the architectural licensing law took effect in 1901, at the age of 24 years old Porporato received license no. 41 on 4 September 1901 without being required to take an examination, evidence that his training was well respected. Most in that category were either members of an older generation who had many years of experience, or had university educations. Porporato practiced under his own name beginning in 1900 on Pine Street before the earthquake, briefly in San Anselmo when his office was destroyed in 1906, and beginning in 1909 for many years at 619 Washington Street near the intersection of Montgomery Street and Montgomery Avenue just south of North Beach.

Porporato's work was barely mentioned in the local architectural press but in 1911 he was awarded a silver medal at the International Exposition at Turin. (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 24 October 1911, p. 4)

In the years before the earthquake, when flats were just emerging as the dominant building type for working class residents in San Francisco, Porporato designed at least 22 flats in the city, six of them in and near North Beach. (*San Francisco Call*, online search through Library of Congress newspaper website)

From 1906 to 1949, Porporato designed at least 95 buildings in North Beach, almost all of them flats including twelve Romeo flats mostly for Italian clients. Examples of Porporato's designs for residential buildings include the twin flat buildings at 437-41 and 443-47 Chestnut Street (1908) (**Figure A28**), 1525-27 Grant Avenue (1911), the twin flats at 1615-33 Grant Avenue and 12-26 Medau Place (1908) (**Figure A29**), 1435 Kearny Street (1911) (**Figure A30**), 1701 Stockton Street (1906) (**Figure A31**), 2050-60 Taylor Street (1907) (**Figure A32**), 819-27 and 839-41 Union Street (1909), 847-49 Union Street (1906), 857 Union Street (1908) (**Figure A33**), and 49-59 Varennes Street (1906). A concentration of his work is on the 800 block of Union Street, where Porporato designed 13 of the existing buildings (**Figure A34**).

He followed the Italian migration out of the city around northern California, designing buildings in South San Francisco, Colma, Los Altos, San Jose, Fairfax, San Anselmo, San Rafael, Richmond, and Placerville.

In addition to flats, he designed dwellings, stores, garages, apartments, a hospital, a school, and various buildings and structures associated with cemeteries — mausoleums, a mortuary chapel, and cemetery monuments.

His best-known works were a receiving vault at the Italian Cemetery in Colma (1900); a Mortuary Chapel for the Societa Italiana di Mutua Beneficenza at the Italian cemetery in Colma (1902) in a Palladian composition with a domed copper roof, art glass windows, and mosaic floors; the Porporato family mausoleum in the Italian cemetery in Colma (1908); the mausoleum of John F. Fugazi of the Italian Bank of San Francisco in the Italian cemetery in San Mateo (before 1911); Saints Peter and Paul Church on Washington Square in 1924. Also on Washington Square, he designed the Dante Building at 1600 Stockton Street (1927) (**Figure A35**) and the Italian Athletic Club at 1630 Stockton Street (1935) (**Figure A36**).

Porporato and his wife, Mary M. (1876-1960) owned their own house at 1938-1940 Leavenworth by 1920. The property was valued at \$15,000 in the 1930 census.

While Porporato did most of his work for Italian clients and must have promoted himself in the Italian community through advertisements and social activities, he was also a member of Woodmen of the World, Knights of Columbus, and the Young Men's Institute, organizations open to a broader segment of the population, apparently without a major impact on his work.



FIGURE A28. 437-41 and 443-47 Chestnut Street
(both constructed in 1908). Architect: John Porporato.
Photo by Judith Powell.



FIGURE A29. 1615-33 Grant Avenue and 12-26 Medau Place
(both constructed in 1908). Architect: John Porporato.
Photo: Google Street View.



FIGURE A30. 1435 Kearny Street.
(constructed in 1911).
Architect: John Porporato.
Photo: Google Street View.



FIGURE A31. 1701 Stockton Street (constructed in 1906).
Architect: John Porporato.
Photo: Google Street View.



FIGURE A32. 2050-60 Taylor Street (constructed in 1907).
Architect: John Porporato.
Photo: Google Street View.



FIGURE A33. 857 Union Street (constructed in 1908).
Architect: John Porporato.
Photo: Google Street View.

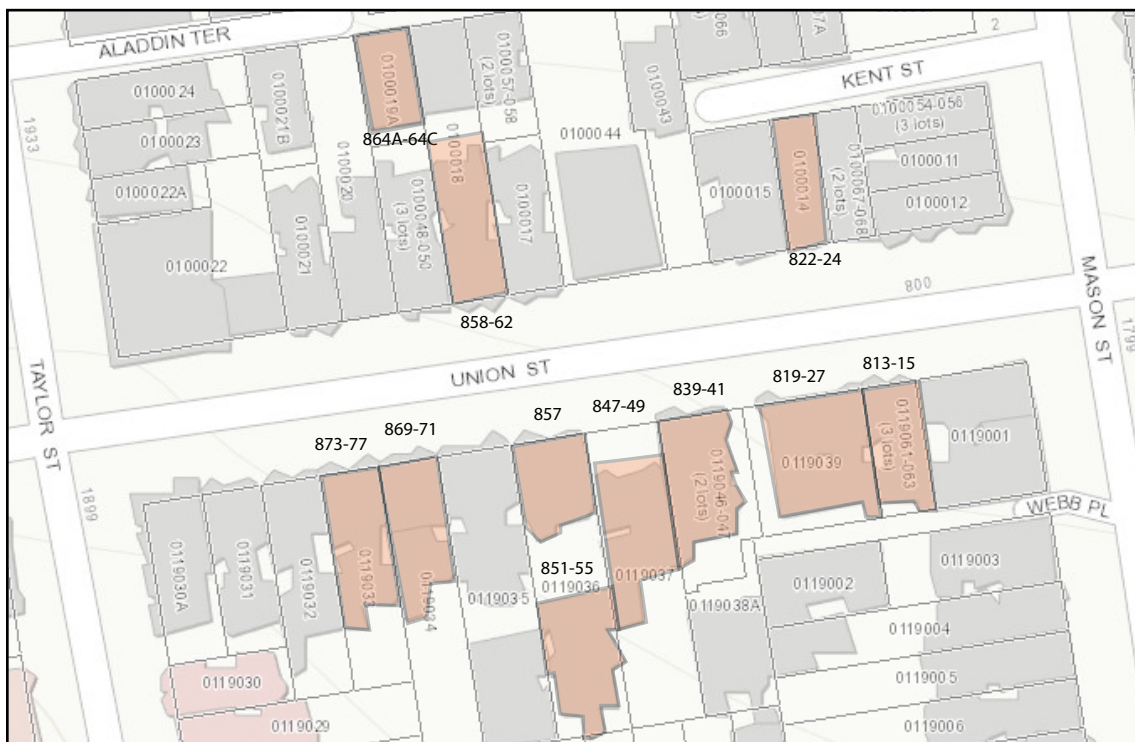


FIGURE A34. 800 block of Union Street showing 13 buildings designed by John Porporato.



FIGURE A35. 1600 Stockton Street, The Dante Building (constructed in 1935).
Architect: John Porporato.
Photo by Judith Powell.



FIGURE A36. 1630 Stockton Street, The Italian Athletic Club (constructed in 1927).
Architect: John Porporato.
Photo by Judith Powell.

ENRICO QUAGELLI

Enrico Quagelli (born 1863) was born in Italy and came to California with his wife Caterina Fortunato in 1882. They lived on Cuvier Street near Bosworth in the Outer Mission District.

Quagelli listed himself in directories and the census as a carpenter, builder, and contractor. On building permit applications he called himself an architect.

Before 1906, notices in newspapers show him as active in building and real estate in scattered areas of San Francisco outside of North Beach, with a mix of Italian and Anglo clients and partners

From 1906 to mid 1908, he designed 17 flats buildings in North Beach, including six Romeo flats, as well as two apartment buildings, mostly for Italian clients. Some examples of Quagelli's work includes 1467-99 Grant Avenue/503 Union Street (1906) (**Figure A37**), 741-45 Union Street/68 August Alley (1906), 751-53 Union Street/69 August Alley (1907), 755-63 Union Street (1907) (**Figure A38**).

In a "strong wind that blew over the city" on the afternoon of 15 July 1906, a macaroni factory under construction by Quagelli at Vallejo and Stockton streets was blown over and wrecked. It was four stories tall "and the lumber had been so badly twisted as to be of very little account," with the loss valued at \$15,000. (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 16 July 1906, p. 7)

After the intense period of reconstruction in North Beach, Quagelli resumed working elsewhere. In the period 1911 to 1913, he bought and developed twelve lots on the Peninsula in a new subdivision called Burlingame Terrace.

By the time he died — between 1913 and 1920 — he had paid off the mortgage on the family home on Cuvier Street.



FIGURE A37. 1467-99 Grant Avenue/503 Union Street
(constructed in 1906). Architect: Enrico Quagelli.
Photo by Judith Powell.



FIGURE A38. 755-63 Union Street
(constructed in 1906). Architect: Enrico Quagelli.
Photo by Judith Powell.

PERSEO RIGHETTI (PARTNERS EMILE DEPIERRE, HENRY KUHL, AND AUGUST HEADMAN)

Perseo Righetti (1872-1928) was born in California 20 December 1872 (some records say 1871). His parents, Aquilino Righetti and Joanna Tognazzini had come from Switzerland, his father from Ticino canton. They were married in Petaluma in 1872 and by 1880 were farming near Nicasio in Marin County, an area where many Swiss dairy ranches were established in the 1870s. (Abbott p. 13, 15)

Righetti first appeared in the San Francisco city directory in 1898 living with his uncle, Candido Righetti, and his family at 2927 Jackson Street. Candido was retired and his occupation is unknown.

In his first year in San Francisco, Righetti was employed as a draftsman for Emile Depierre (1844-1912). After two years as a draftsman in what was probably an apprenticeship, Righetti joined Depierre as a partner in the firm of Depierre & Righetti at 334 Kearny Street.

Depierre was born in Lausanne, Switzerland, a French-speaking city. According to Harold Kirker, he studied at “the French Academy of Design and is said to have enjoyed a public and private practice in Paris.” (Kirker 1973: 52)

He came to the United States in 1877 and to San Francisco by 1884. Depierre’s practice was most active from 1889 to 1901 during which time he designed numerous ordinary buildings, a sepulcher at Holy Cross cemetery for Charles C. Carpy, and two expensive houses for Dr. Ferdinand Bazan, one in San Francisco and one in Belvedere. Depierre was best known for his work on the French Hospital. He won second place to G. Morin Goustiaux, a French architect trained at the Ecole des Beaux Arts working with William Mooser from Switzerland, in a competition for designing the hospital. While Goustiaux’s design was chosen, Depierre was hired to supervise the construction. (Kirker p. 52; *San Francisco Chronicle*, 30 June 1895, p. 30) As the work progressed he modified and added to the hospital complex, work that was still continuing after Righetti began working in the office. “During the construction of the French Hospital Depierre fell from a scaffold and was seriously injured. Owing to the accident, one of his arms was amputated.” (*San Francisco Call*, 12 February 1912, p. 8) This accident may have resulted in increased responsibilities for Righetti. According to his obituary in 1912, Depierre “retired from active professional work 12 years ago,” in 1900, the year the partnership with Righetti was first listed in the directory. The partnership was listed until 1903 when Depierre and his wife Julia, a native of Paris, planned a trip to Europe for up to two years. He retired and relinquished his architectural license 17 November 1905. (Secretary of State 1947)

When the Depierre’s returned, they gave up their long-time home at 701 Ashbury Street and lived in Alameda County until his death. At that time the *Call* described him as “a prominent architect of San Francisco for many years,” erroneously as “a native of France,” and “a leader for many years in the French colony.” Although born in Switzerland, he had studied and worked in Paris and married a French woman, and may have identified with France as well as Switzerland. In 1900 he attended a reception at the Bohemian Club for a visiting Frenchman, Emile Benard, winner of the Phoebe Hearst competition for the University of California, with a group that included numerous local architects who had also lived and studied in Paris.

In the second year of the partnership with Depierre, the architectural licensing law took effect and both Righetti and Depierre were issued licenses (no. 48 and 49, respectively) on the same day, 4 September 1901, without examination. In the case of Depierre, this was a testament to his formal architectural education and his long experience. In the case of Righetti, it was a testament to the professional regard for Depierre as a teacher and model.

After the partnership with Depierre, Righetti was in other partnerships, from 1904 to 1908 with Henry Kuhl,

and from 1909 to 1914 with August Headman. For North Beach, the most important of these partnerships was with Henry Kuhl. Kuhl was first listed in San Francisco in 1903 as a draftsman for Salfield & Kohlberg. In April 1903 he was hired along with Earl B. Scott and Walter J. Cuthbertson by the Board of Supervisors “to prepare plans for schools and other buildings” for a bond election (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 16 April 1903, p. 11). A rendering of a proposal for Lowell High School by Kuhl showed a monumental Romanesque style building with a domed observatory. (*San Francisco Call*, 4 May 1903, p. 9) On 29 August 1903, Kuhl was issued architectural license 341 after passing the examination. He was last listed in San Francisco directories in 1908, and died by 1916. (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 12 January 1916, p. 33)

Ten days after the 1906 earthquake, Righetti and Kuhl published an advertisement as architects located at 2927 Jackson Street. From 1906 to 1908 they designed 36 buildings in North Beach, almost all for Italian clients, 26 of which were flats. Among these were two Romeo flats designed under the initial building law of July 1906, one of which was an enclosed Romeo flats building. They also designed one Romeo flats building under the first state tenement house law. Examples of their Romeo flats include those at 152-54 Pfeiffer Street (1906) and 19-33 Medau Place (1909) (**Figure A39**). They also designed the flats buildings at 818-20 Filbert Street (1906), 701-09 Columbus Avenue/720-22 Filbert Street (1906), and 1427-31 Grant Avenue (1906), and the apartment buildings at 1660 Mason Street (1908) (**Figure A40**) and 55-59 Osgood Place (1906).



FIGURE A39. 19-33 Medau Place, Romeo flats
(constructed in 1909).
Architects: Righetti and Kuhl.
Photo by Judith Powell.

Their largest project was outside of North Beach — the 1907 Pioneer Hotel (also called the Argonaut) for the Society of California Pioneers on Fourth Street at Jessie. They also designed the Marin County Hall of Records in San Rafael, and a bank and a Masonic Temple in Santa Maria.

After the partnership with Kuhl ended, Righetti’s new practice with August Headman (1883-1925) produced different types of buildings than those in North Beach, and in different locations — mostly in neighborhoods where fireproof buildings were required. Their partnership sought out a different class of clients, mostly developers of apartment buildings and hotels downtown. Their best-known building was the Native Sons of the Golden West at 414 Mason Street. They entered the competition for the San Francisco City Hall. From 1909 to 1914 they designed only five buildings in North Beach, all flats and all for Italian clients. Two were Romeo flats at 51-61 Medau Place (1909) and 540-50 Filbert Street (1909), and one was an unusual building at 1160-1170 Montgomery Street/275-99 Green Street (1913) (**Figure A41**) with 14 flats on three floors. Other examples of their work include 686-94 Lombard Street/2100 Mason Street (1912), and 1600-04 Powell Street/684-98 Green Street (1912).

Headman, the son of a machinist, moved to San Francisco as a youth and attended public high school and classes at the Hopkins Art Institute, the Mechanic’s Institute, and the Humboldt Evening Technical School. During these years he worked in the offices of Havens & Toepke and Salfield &

Kohlberg and in 1901, he was among “thirteen ambitious young men of the architectural profession” who founded the San Francisco Architectural Club. (Sherman 1914)

In 1905, he left San Francisco for the University of Pennsylvania where he received a Certificate of Proficiency in Architecture upon completion of the two-year Special Course in Architecture in 1907. Among his fellow students was Ernest H. Hildebrand. After graduating, he worked for Walker & Gillette in New York. In 1908 he studied in Paris at the Ecole des Beaux Arts. In 1909, he returned to San Francisco and formed a partnership with Righetti. In that year he was issued architectural license No. 546 after passing the examination.

Righetti lived for many years with his uncle Candido and later by himself on Jackson and Walnut Streets in Presidio Heights. He never married but was active in Swiss cultural organizations as a competitor with the Swiss Rifle Club and an organizer of the Swiss-American auxiliary of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition.



FIGURE A40. 1660 Mason Street, apartments (constructed in 1908).
Architects: Righetti and Kuhl. Photo by Judith Powell.



FIGURE A41. 1160-70 Montgomery Street/275-99 Green Street (constructed in 1913).
Architect: Righetti and Headman. Photo by Julie Jaycox.

LOUIS TRAVERSO (PARTNER P. DEMARTINI)

Luigi Traverso (1868-1957) who changed his name to Louis was born in Italy. He arrived in New York on his way to San Francisco on 6 April 1896 and was naturalized as a citizen in 1900. In 1899 he married Rosa Traverso (1874-1942), perhaps a cousin, who came from Italy, in San Francisco on 21 May 1898.

By 1898, Traverso was working as a contractor in the firm of P. DeMartini & L. Traverso. Because Paul J. DeMartini was working with his brother at that time, Traverso's partner would appear to have been another of several P. DeMartinis listed. Of ten contract notices in the *San Francisco Call* in that period, all were for Italian clients and at least half were flats. Three were in North Beach and the rest were in the Western Addition and scattered around San Francisco. In a period when many buildings were designed and built by contractors, all ten were designed by professionally trained architects including Thomas J. Welsh, James Francis Dunn, Stone & Smith, and four by John A. Porporato.

After the earthquake, Traverso opened his own office as an architect, listed as such until his name was published in the *Daily Pacific Builder* as a "Non-certificated" Architect on 25 July 1912.

From 1906 to 1925, Traverso designed 70 buildings in North Beach, 66 of them flats, five of which were Romeo flats. His overall practice also included a few stores, dwellings, apartments, a wagon shed, and a stable. Most of his work was in North Beach and all but two buildings were in San Francisco. All of his clients were Italian. Examples include 1317-21 Grant Avenue (1908), 1528 Grant Avenue (1909) (**Figure A42**), 19-33 Jasper Place (1909), 24-34 Jasper Place (1914) (**Figure A43**), 36-40 Jasper Place (1913), 1501-15 Mason Street/902-94 Broadway (1908), 1734-40 Mason Street (1908) (**Figure A44**), 2055-59 Powell Street (1908) (see Figure 105), and Traverso's home at 852-56 Union Street (1910) (**Figure A45**).



FIGURE A42. 1528 Grant Avenue
(constructed in 1909). Architect: Louis Traverso.
Photo by Nancy Shanahan.

Traverso lived in North Beach except in the years after the 1906 earthquake when he was at the north end of Octavia Street.



FIGURE A43. 24-34 Jasper Place (constructed in 1914).
Architect: Louis Traverso.
Photo by Judith Powell.



FIGURE A44. 1734-40 Mason Street
(constructed in 1908). Architect: Louis Traverso.
Photo by Judith Powell.



FIGURE A45. 852-56 Union Street
(constructed in 1910). Architect: Louis Traverso.
Photo by Judith Powell.

ITALO ZANOLINI (PARTNER GRACE JEWETT)

Italo Zanolini (1867-1949) was born in Italy and lived near the Swiss border in the Province of Como, Region of Lombardy. He came to the United States in 1906 just after the earthquake arriving in New York on 26 June 1906 on his way to San Francisco. His wife, Elisa came later the same year, arriving in New York with their adopted son in November.

Zanolini appears to have had a university education. On immigration records, he described himself as an engineer. He was described as a member of the “Beaux-Arts” at the Royal Academy of Brera in Milano. He was issued architectural license no. 514 on 3 August 1908 without examination, evidence of respect for his professional training.

Zanolini first worked as a draftsman in 1907 and 1908. With his license, in 1909 he opened his own office at 604 Montgomery near North Beach.

Grace Jewett (1876-1946) studied at the Pratt Institute of Fine Arts in New York and in the Washington Atelier in Washington, D.C. where she was taught in the manner of the Ecole des Beaux Arts. Her first jobs were in New York and Baltimore before coming to San Francisco about 1908 where “she worked as a draftsman in the City Architect’s office.” (Horton 2010: 249) After receiving her architectural license (no. 649) on 28 February 1911, on the basis of examination, she formed a partnership with Zanolini. While it is unclear what each brought to the other, her experience working for the city may have appeared helpful to Zanolini in finding work or negotiating city rules and his partnership may have been a rare job opportunity for Jewett at a time when few hired women.

Before she joined Zanolini, she designed a six-story apartment building on Bush Street. Together they designed apartments and a garage outside of North Beach. Later she designed a variety of types of buildings in San Francisco and on the peninsula. (Horton 2010: 251-252)

Unlike most of the Italian architects who practiced in North Beach, Zanolini designed only seven flats (at least under his own name), three of them during his partnership with Grace Jewett in 1913-1914, including the Romeo flats building at 849-53 Vallejo Street (1913). While most Italian architects designed mostly flats, supplemented by a few dwellings, hotels, apartments, and commercial buildings, Zanolini designed a few relatively distinctive buildings, notably Fugazi Hall, the theater at 678 Green Street (1912) (**Figure A46**), The Italian-American Bank at 270 Columbus Avenue (1922) (**Figure A47**), an addition to the Fugazi Banca Popolare (1916) at 4 Columbus Avenue in the gore between the foot of Columbus Avenue and Montgomery Street (Landmark No. 52), and a bookstore for A. Cavalli (1918) in the building at 255 Columbus Avenue, long occupied by Vesuvio Cafe (**Figure A48**). In each of these, Zanolini decorated the facades with delicate architectural compositions and details based on Renaissance and Baroque traditions.

Zanolini's practice was also unusual among Italian architects in San Francisco in that although mostly for Italian clients, most of his work was outside of North Beach. Between 1909 and 1940 Zanolini designed only twelve buildings in North Beach, but many more around San Francisco and the Bay Area, including Oakland, Livermore, Pleasanton, Pittsburgh, San Rafael, Ross, Kentfield, and Colma. One example of his work was the L. Schenone Building (1914) on First Street in Livermore, "One of Livermore's first reinforced-concrete structures, . . . somewhat Mission Revival in style." (Cerny 2007: 233)

In addition to the theater and bank for John F. Fugazi, he designed a Fugazi family chapel at the Italian cemetery in Colma. (Svanevik and Burgett 1995: 96-97). With Grace Jewett he designed a garage on Bush Street near Polk with a generally Palladian facade. (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 6 June 1914, p. 4) Altogether his practice included stores, flats, hotels, apartments, dwellings, funerary buildings, garages, banks, and a theater. In 1912, he entered a design in the competition for the San Francisco City Hall.

He was also "a teacher of architectural design" (Svanevik and Burgett 1995: 96).

Zanolini and his family lived in North Beach when they came to San Francisco but by 1920 moved to 2901 King Street in Berkeley. In that year they traveled for seven months to France and Italy. Returning to the East Bay, Zanolini was among the founders and a director of the Italian Masonic Club of Oakland. By 1930 the Zanolinis lived in Marin County near their son. In 1950, at the age of 82, a year after her husband's death, his widow traveled alone to Italy and back.

A measure of Zanolini's position among Italians in San Francisco was his presence at the Table of Honor with William Randolph Hearst, major-elect Rolph, Andrea Sbarboro, Ettore Patrizi, and others at a banquet at the Dante Restaurant at 536 Broadway. The banquet, attended by 140 men, was a tribute by the Italian community for Hearst's support of Italy in its war with Turkey. (*Oakland Tribune*, 30 December 1911, p. 5)



FIGURE A46. Fugazi Hall, 678 Beach Blanket Babylon Boulevard,
formerly Green Street (constructed in 1912).
Architect: Italo Zanolini.
Photo by Dennis Hearne.



FIGURE A47. 270 Columbus Avenue (constructed in 1922).
Formerly the Italian American Bank.
Architect: Italo Zanolini.
Photo: Google Street View.



FIGURE A48. Vesuvio Cafe, 253-55 Columbus Avenue (constructed in 1919).
Formerly A. Cavalli Bookstore.
Architect: Italo Zanolini.
Photo by J. G. Corbett.

APPENDIX B: LISTED RESOURCES - 1982 NORTH BEACH SURVEY

Address	Parcel No.	Resources and Districts
15-17 Bannan Place	0116/052 ptn	Grant Avenue District
19-29 Bannan Place	0116/051	Grant Avenue District
31-35 Bannan Place	0116/050	Grant Avenue District
37-41 Bannan Place	0116/049	Grant Avenue District
10-22 Bob Kaufman Place (formerly Harwood)	0104/036 ptn	Grant Avenue District
28-38 Bob Kaufman Place (formerly Harwood)	0104/037	Grant Avenue District
333 Broadway	0164/030	Jackson Square Extension
355 Broadway	0164/020	Jackson Square Extension
369 Broadway/20 Bartol St.	0164/017	Jackson Square Extension
373-77 Broadway/24 Bartol St.	0164/018	Jackson Square Extension
381-89 Broadway	0164/014	Jackson Square Extension
400-06 Broadway/1025 Montgomery Ave.	0144/007	Individual Listing
401-07 Broadway/923 Montgomery Ave.	0163/001	Jackson Square Extension
435-43 Broadway	0163/028	Jackson Square Extension
465-67 Broadway (463 Broadway)	0163/029 ptn	Jackson Square Extension
471-73 Broadway (473 Broadway)	0163/029 ptn	Jackson Square Extension
475-79 Broadway	0163/023	Jackson Square Extension
483-93 Broadway/1054 Kearny St.	0163/022	Jackson Square Extension
527-29 Broadway/12 William Saroyan (Adler)	0162/024	Individual Listing
754-60 Broadway	0147/011	Individual Listing
530-50 Chestnut St./415 Francisco St.	0052/029-116	Individual Listing; Landmark #129
1-21 Columbus Ave./612-24 Washington St.	0195/004	Individual Listing; Landmark #237; National Register #07001469
57-67 Columbus Ave.	0195/016	Individual Listing
211-41 Columbus Ave./614-26 Pacific St.	0162/005	Individual Listing
222 Columbus Ave./1007 Kearny St.	0162/003	Individual Listing
253-55 Columbus Ave.	0162/019	Individual Listing
261-71 Columbus Ave.	0162/018	Individual Listing; Landmark # 228
270 Columbus Ave.	0162/022	Individual Listing
371-73 Columbus Ave.	0146/025	Individual Listing
408-14 Columbus Ave.	0131/015	Individual Listing
420-36 Columbus Ave.	0131/016	Individual Listing
444-54 Columbus Ave.	0131/017	Individual Listing

Address	Parcel No.	Resources and Districts
456-68 Columbus Ave.	0131/019 ptn	Individual Listing
470-90 Columbus Ave.	0131/018	Individual Listing
552-66 Columbus Ave.	0117/020	Washington Square
443-45 Filbert St./198 Varennes St.	0104/053 ptn	Grant Avenue District
449-55 Filbert St./199 Varennes St.	0104/040	Grant Avenue District
501 Filbert St.	0103/001	Grant Avenue District
519-21 Filbert St.	0103/038	Grant Avenue District
520-24 Filbert St.	0088/049-051	Grant Avenue District
525-35 Filbert St.	0103/035	Grant Avenue District
526-30 Filbert St.	0088/052-054	Grant Avenue District
537-47 Filbert St.	0103/034 ptn	Grant Avenue District
551-55 Filbert St./159-63 Jasper Place	0103/023	Grant Avenue District
552-56 Filbert St.	0088/010 ptn	Grant Avenue District
650 Filbert St.	0089/015	Individual Listing & Washington Square District
666 Filbert St.	0089/016	Washington Sq. District
700 Filbert St./ 1811-21 Powell St./700 Columbus Ave./4-12 Via Bufano	0090/008	Wash. Sq. District (700 Filbert) & Powell St. Shops District (1811-21 Powell)
721 Filbert St.	0101/031	Individual Listing
555 Francisco St.	0051/020	Individual Listing
1226-30 Grant Ave./99 Fresno St.	0145/015	Grant Avenue District
1232 Grant Ave./98 Fresno St.	0145/030	Grant Avenue District
1234 Grant Ave.	0145/031	Grant Avenue District
1268 Grant Ave./599 Vallejo St.	0145/032	Grant Avenue District
1300-26 Grant Ave./582-84 Vallejo St.	0132/028	Grant Avenue District
1317-21 Grant Ave.	0131/006	Grant Avenue District
1325-29 Grant Ave.	0131/005	Grant Avenue District
1331-35 Grant Ave.	0131/004	Grant Avenue District
1336-48 Grant Ave.	0132/029 ptn	Grant Avenue District
1337-39 Grant Ave.	0131/003	Grant Avenue District
1345-61 Grant Ave.	0131/002	Grant Avenue District
1350-98 Grant Ave./499 Green St.	0132/051	Grant Avenue District
1363-71 Grant Ave.	0131/001	Grant Avenue District
1400-24 Grant Ave.	0115/019 ptn	Grant Avenue District

Address	Parcel No.	Resources and Districts
1401-11 Grant Ave./500-02 Green St.	0116/011	Grant Avenue District
1415-19 Grant Ave./14 Bannan Place	0116/010	Grant Avenue District
1427-31 Grant Ave./28 Bannan Place	0116/008	Grant Avenue District
1434-38 Grant Ave.	0115/020	Grant Avenue District
1435-39 Grant Ave.	0116/007	Grant Avenue District
1441-43 Grant Ave./38 Bannan Place	0116/005	Grant Avenue District
1445-49 Grant Ave.	0116/004 ptn	Grant Avenue District
1446-62 Grant Ave./485 Union St.	0115/021	Grant Avenue District
1453-59 Grant Ave.	0116/003 ptn	Grant Avenue District
1461-65 Grant Ave./58 Bannan Place	0116/002	Grant Avenue District
1467-99 Grant Ave./503-05 Union St.	0116/001	Grant Avenue District
1500-02 Grant Ave./498 Union St.	0104/024	Grant Avenue District
1501-05 Grant Ave./510-16 Union St.	0103/007	Grant Avenue District
1508-10 Grant Ave.	0104/023 ptn	Grant Avenue District
1519-23 Grant Ave.	0103/005	Grant Avenue District
1525-27 Grant Ave./34 Cadell Alley	0103/004	Grant Avenue District
1528-32 Grant Ave.	0104/029	Grant Avenue District
1534-38 Grant Ave.	0104/030	Grant Avenue District
1539-45 Grant Ave.	0103/039	Grant Avenue District
1540-44 Grant Ave./15-17 Bob Kaufman Pl.	0104/031	Grant Avenue District
1546-50 Grant Ave.	0104/032 ptn	Grant Avenue District
1552-56 Grant Ave./25 Bob Kaufman Place	0104/033	Grant Avenue District
1558-62 Grant Ave./485-99 Filbert St.	0104/034	Grant Avenue District
1615-33 Grant Ave.	0088/005 ptn	Grant Avenue District
450 Green St./1-5 Varennes St.	0115/016	Grant Avenue District
466-78 Green St.	0115/019 ptn	Grant Avenue Dist; Landmark #127
510-12 Green St.	0116/012	Grant Avenue District
517-23 Green St.	0131/024	Grant Avenue District
516-24 Green St./2 Bannan Place	0116/013	Grant Avenue District
535 Green St.	0131/020	Grant Avenue District National Register # #SG100006073
538-42 Green St.	0116/016	Grant Avenue District
545-55 Green St.	0131/019 ptn	Grant Avenue District
544-48 Green St./20 Jasper Place	0116/017	Grant Avenue District
568-74 Green St.	0116/020	Grant Avenue District
678 Green St.	0117/010	Individual Listing
735-41 Green St.	0129/031 ptn	Individual Listing

Address	Parcel No.	Resources and Districts
745-51 Green St.	0129/030 ptn	Individual Listing
833-37 Greenwich St.	0091/052	Individual Listing
19-23 Jasper Place	0116/039	Grant Avenue District
24-34 Jasper Place	0116/040	Grant Avenue District
25-29 Jasper Place	0116/038	Grant Avenue District
31-35 Jasper Place	0116/037	Grant Avenue District
34-40 Jasper Place	0116/041	Grant Avenue District
37-41 Jasper Place	0116/036	Grant Avenue District
42-46 Jasper Place	0116/042	Grant Avenue District
43-47 Jasper Place	0116/035	Grant Avenue District
49-53 Jasper Place	0116/034	Grant Avenue District
114-20 Jasper Place	0103/029	Grant Avenue District
124-32 Jasper Place	0103/030	Grant Avenue District
127-29 Jasper Place	0103/027	Grant Avenue District
131-37 Jasper Place	0103/026	Grant Avenue District
134-36 Jasper Place	0103/031	Grant Avenue District
139-45 Jasper Place	0103/025	Grant Avenue District
140-42 Jasper Place	0103/032	Grant Avenue District
149-53 Jasper Place	0103/024	Grant Avenue District
152-62 Jasper Place	0103/033	Grant Avenue District
916-24 Kearny St./141 Columbus Ave.	0176/013	Individual Listing; Landmark #33
1030 Kearny St.	0163/019	Jackson Square Extension
1034 Kearny St.	0163/020	Jackson Square Extension
1042-46 Kearny St.	0163/021	Jackson Square Extension
1743-47 Mason St.	0119/003	Individual Listing
1934-38 Mason St.	0090/017	Individual Listing
12-26 Medau St.	0088/005 ptn	Grant Avenue District
19-33 Medau St.	0088/041-048	Grant Avenue District
51-61 Medau St.	0088/009 ptn	Grant Avenue District
1000 Montgomery St./392-96 Broadway	0143/009 ptn	Individual Listing
2 Nobles Alley	0104/026	Grant Avenue District
15 Nobles Alley	0104/021	Grant Avenue District

Address	Parcel No.	Resources and Districts
21-25 Nobles Alley/460-64 Union St.	0104/019	Grant Avenue District
2 Nottingham Place	0163/018	Jackson Square Extension
6-8 Nottingham Place	0163/017	Jackson Square Extension
10 Nottingham Place	0163/016	Jackson Square Extension
12 Nottingham Place	0163/015	Jackson Square Extension
17 Osgood Place	0164/015	NRHP; Jackson Sq. Extension
43-47 Osgood Place	0164/023	NRHP; Jackson Sq. Extension
55-59 Osgood Place	0164/022	NRHP; Jackson Sq. Extension
1526 Powell St.	0130/025	Individual Listing
1701-11 Powell St.	0101/005A ptn	Washington Square District
1717 Powell St.	0101/005	Washington Square District
1741 Powell St./601 Columbus Ave.	0101/004	Washington Square District
1823-27 Powell St.	0090/007 ptn	Powell St. Shops District
1831 Powell St.	0090/006	Powell St. Shops District
1833-37 Powell St.	0090/005	Powell St. Shops District
1847-51 Powell St.	0090/003 ptn	Powell St. Shops District
1853-55 Powell St.	0090/002	Powell St. Shops District
1859-67 Powell St.	0090/001	Powell St. Shops District
2032-34 Powell St.	0063/020	Individual Listing
2035-41 Powell St.	0064/005	Individual Listing
2055-59 Powell St.	0064/02 ptn	Individual Listing
2155-61 Powell St./401-05 Francisco St.	0064/01	Individual Listing
825 Sansome St.	0164/003	Jackson Square Extension
847 Sansome St.	0164/002	Jackson Square Extension
1435-45 Stockton St.	0130/002	Individual Listing
1455 Stockton St.	0130/001	Individual Listing
1512 Stockton St.	0116/020C	Individual Listing
1556-70 Stockton St.	0116/054	Washington Square District
1606 Stockton St./576-80 Union St.	0103/014	Washington Square District
1630 Stockton St.	0103/014A	Washington Square District
1640 Stockton St.	0103/015	Washington Square District
1700-04 Stockton St./584-86 Filbert St.	0088/016	Washington Square District
1701-15 Stockton St./600-04 Filbert St.	0089/010	Washington Square District
1736 Stockton St.	0088/020	Individual Listing

Address	Parcel No.	Resources and Districts
1864-66 Stockton St.	0077/032A	Individual Listing
442 Union St.	0104/015	Grant Avenue District
443-45 Union St./58-68 Varennes St.	0115/066-069	Grant Avenue District
453-63 Union St.	0115/024	Grant Avenue District
454-458 Union St.	0104/017	Grant Avenue District
465-69 Union St.	0115/023	Grant Avenue District
471-75 Union St.	0115/022	Grant Avenue District
478-82 Union St.	0104/022 ptn	Grant Avenue District
524 Union St./3-9 Cadell St.	0103/009	Grant Avenue District
539-43 Union St.	0116/043	Grant Avenue District
544-58 Union St.	0103/011	Grant Avenue District; Landmark #287
547-51 Union St.	0116/033	Grant Avenue District
554-56 Union St.	0103/012	Grant Avenue District
555-59 Union St.	0116/032	Grant Avenue District
558-62 Union St.	0103/012A	Grant Avenue District
561-65 Union St.	0116/031	Grant Avenue District
567-77 Union St.	0116/030	Grant Avenue District
601-21 Union St./1539-49 Stockton St.	0117/001ptn	Washington Square District
629-31 Union St./546-48 Columbus Ave.	0117/021	Washington Square District
651-73 Union St./1656 Powell St./ 585 Columbus	0117/016 ptn	Washington Square District
701-09 Union St./1665 Powell St.	0118/001	Washington Square District
601-11 Vallejo St./1249-55 Grant Ave. /354-66 Columbus Ave.	0146/001	Grant Avenue District
610 Vallejo St./1301 Grant Ave.	0131/008	Grant Avenue District
620 Vallejo St.	0131/009	Individual Listing; Landmark #5
7 Varennes St.	0115/032	Grant Avenue District
20-24 Varennes St.	0115/034	Grant Avenue District
23-25 Varennes St.	0115/031	Grant Avenue District
26-30 Varennes St.	0115/035	Grant Avenue District
32-40 Varennes St.	0115/036	Grant Avenue District
35-39 Varennes St.	0115/029	Grant Avenue District
42-44 Varennes St.	0115/038	Grant Avenue District
43-47 Varennes St.	0115/028	Grant Avenue District

Address	Parcel No.	Resources and Districts
46-50 Varennes St.	0115/039	Grant Avenue District
49-59 Varennes St.	0115/026	Grant Avenue District
122-24 Varennes St.	0104/048	Grant Avenue District
126-28 Varennes St.	0104/049	Grant Avenue District
144-48 Varennes St.	0104/051 ptn	Grant Avenue District
152-58 Varennes St.	0104/068	Grant Avenue District
Washington Square	0102/001-002	Washington Sq. Dist; Landmark #226
Washington Sq. - Volunteer Fire Dept. Statue	0102/001	Washington Sq. Dist; Landmark #226
Washington Sq. - Survey Marker	0102/001	Washington Sq. Dist; Landmark #226
Washington Sq. - Benjamin Franklin Statue	0102/001	Washington Sq. Dist; Landmark #226
Washington Sq. - "Thirst" Statue	0102/002	Washington Sq. Dist; Landmark #226
Washington Sq. - Marini Bust	0102/002	Washington Sq. Dist; Landmark #226
Washington Sq. - Birdbath	0102/002	Washington Sq. Dist; Landmark #226

APPENDIX C: MODERN ARCHITECTS IN NORTH BEACH

This appendix includes buildings in North Beach designed by architects identified in the San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design 1935 - 1970 Historic Context Statement (Modern Context Statement) on file with the San Francisco Planning Department. Further research may identify additional buildings in North Beach by these architects and others.

Biographies of most of the architects listed below can be found in the Modern Context Statement, which also identifies character-defining features of Modern architectural and landscape design and documents significance, criteria considerations, and integrity thresholds.

Architect	Building Name/Address (Year Built)	Property Type
Dailey, Gardner	325-29 Lombard Street (1937) (See Figure 93) 275 Telegraph Hill Boulevard (1940) 281 Telegraph Hill Boulevard (1936) 285 Telegraph Hill Boulevard (1935)	Flats Apartments Flats Dwelling
Miller and Plueger	Bimbo's 365 Club, 1025 Columbus Avenue, (1930 and 1934)	Commercial
Wurster, William W.	22 Aladdin Terrace (1939)	Flats
Howard, Henry Temple	521-23 Francisco Street/30 Water Street (1939) for noted artists Robert Boardman Howard and Adaline Kent	Artist studio and loft
Hertzka & Knowles	386-88 Chestnut Street (1940) (See Figure 94) 392-94 Chestnut Street (1940) (See Figure 94) 580 Green Street (1962)	Flats Flats Commercial
Baumann, Herman C.	474-76 Filbert Avenue (1938) 480-82 Filbert Avenue (1938) 835-39 Filbert Avenue (1936) 294-96 Francisco Street (1941) 1628-30 Grant Avenue (1938) 650-52 Lombard Street (1939) 1916-18 Stockton Street (1940) (See Figure 95) 1922-24 Stockton Street (1940) (See Figure 95) 1934-36 Stockton Street (1940) 2110-12 Stockton Street (1941)	Flats Flats Flats Flats Flats Flats Flats Flats Flats Flats
Rist, Martin	470 Columbus Avenue (1936) (See Figure 96) Buon Gusto Sausage Factory, 535 Green Street, (1946)	Commercial Industrial
Conrich, Lloyd	359 Green Street (1963) 361-63 Green Street (1953) 566 Vallejo Street (1955)	Apartments Apartments Apartments

Architect	Building Name/Address (Year Built)	Property Type
Bolles, John S.	460 Filbert Street (1957)	Apartments
Halprin, Lawrence & Baylis, Douglas	Washington Square Park (1957 redesign) (See Figure 138)	Institution
Hsieh, Thomas	Salvation Army Building, 1450 Powell Street (1971)	Institution
McDonald, Donald	460 Francisco Street (1979)	Apartments
Appleton & Wolfard	Former North Beach Library, 800 Columbus Avenue/2020 Mason Street (1958) listed on the National Register of Historic Places and demolished in 2014	Institution
Esherick, Homsey, Dodge, and Davis	Garfield School, 420 Filbert Street (c. 1981)	Institution
Canali, Peter D.	Rossi Market building, 627 Vallejo Street (1932) (See Figure 97)	Commercial
Major, Harold K.	1050 Columbus Avenue (1961) 1821 Grant Avenue (1964) 1831 Grant Avenue (1964) 570 Union Street (1965)	Apartments Apartments Apartments Apartments
Kelley, John G.	Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Center, 660 Lombard Street (1953)	Institution
Sazevich & Walsh	439 Greenwich Street (1961) (See Figure 72)	Apartments

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