

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

Primary #  
HRI #  
Trinomial  
NRHP Status Code 3S

Other Listings  
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 5 \*Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) Underwood Building

P1. Other Identifier: Virginia Apartments

\*P2. Location:  Not for Publication  Unrestricted \*a. County Alameda

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

\*b. USGS 7.5' Quad Oakland West Date 1993 Township & Range No data

c. Address 2110-2114 Addison St. City Berkeley Zip 94704

d. UTM: (Give more than one for large and/or linear resources) Zone 10S; 5645462mE/ 4191766mN

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

Assessor's Parcel Number: 57-2032-12;

South side of Addison Street between Shattuck Avenue and Oxford Street.

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

Determined eligible for the National Register, the Underwood Building/Virginia Apartments Building at 2110-2114 Addison St. is an excellent example of mixed-use design from the early twentieth century. The building is a Contributor to the Shattuck Avenue Downtown Historic District and a City of Berkeley Structure of Merit.

Although some elements have been altered over time, the three-story building, with its two-story angled bay windows, brick framework and classical detailing, continues today to exhibit recognizable original materials and serve as a clear example of historic construction in the downtown core. Previously described as "Colonial Revival," this style of building, so distinctively illustrating design of the early 1900s, is also commonly known as "Neoclassical," for its use of classical trim and proportions.

(Continued on next page)

\*P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP3. Multiple family property

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



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #)

View facing south, January 2015.

\*P6. Date Constructed/Age & Sources:

Historic  Prehistoric  Both

1905/ 110 years old, COB permit files and *Daily Pacific Builder* 8/23/1905.

\*P7. Owner and Address:

Frank & Dorothy Cheng  
25 Buckeye Ct.  
Hillsborough, CA 94010

\*P8. Recorded by: (Name, affiliation, and address)

F. Maggi, L. Dill, & S. Winder  
Archives & Architecture, LLC  
PO Box 1332  
San Jose CA 95109-1332

\*P9. Date Recorded: 3/2/2015

\*P10. Survey Type: (Describe)  
Intensive

\*P11. Report Citation: (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none".)

Archives & Architecture LLC: Shattuck Avenue Commercial Corridor Historic Context and Survey, 2015.

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

DPR523A

\*Required information

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\*Recorded by Franklin Maggi, Leslie Dill, & Sarah Winder \*Date 3/2/2015  Continuation  Update

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The apartment building sits within a historic setting of mostly older properties that are secondary to and supportive of the primary commercial corridor along Shattuck Avenue and the transit center that connects the city with the University of California campus. Addison Street was not originally a through street, and its development served a supporting role to the primary downtown core.

The asymmetrical first floor features four large openings separated by brick piers. To the west is a symmetrical tripartite composition that consists of a pair of outer display windows that flank the recessed central entrance bay. The shared entry area includes a center apartment door that is flanked by angled doors to the side retail spaces. To the east is a gated open driveway entrance, somewhat narrower than the other three bays. The second and third floors also consist of four architectural bays. These are symmetrical and evenly spaced and do not align directly with the ground-floor openings. Each upper bay features a cantilevered angled-bay window with neoclassical detailing. The bay windows are separated by brick piers and the building structure terminates with a brick parapet wall.

The original downstairs storefronts feature large plate-glass display windows topped by multi-lite transoms with vertical muntins. The transoms have been painted or infilled, but the muntins remain. The original bulkhead materials appear to have been altered over time; one with an applied board; the other with the removal of materials. The two angled entrances consist of original single-lite wood doors with multi-lite transoms that match the upper display windows. These doors have a single sidelight apiece. The central apartment entrance has been replaced with an aluminum door and frame; this includes a transom and pair of sidelights. The entrance recess features original mosaic tile flooring. The prominent series of projecting bay windows are clad in stucco. Each two-story bay is cantilevered (without brackets) with dentils at the base. The collection of bay windows is topped by a continuous flat-roof cornice that consists of a ribbed fascia, simple modillion blocks, and a row of dentils. The face of the bays includes a flat-board band at the top and bottom, and the windows are separated by spandrel panels with a framed outline. A one-over-one window is at each face of the bay windows; these are replacement units with aluminum sash and some added filler. At the center of the upstairs is a fire escape. The vertical ladder is supported with wedge-shaped landings and wrought-iron balusters of unknown age. Of interest is the pair of symmetrically placed vent stacks. It is unusual to feature these so prominently on the front façade of a building, but the original owner was a sheet metal fabricator, so it can be speculated that these elements represent a conscious design objective.

This building serves pedestrian traffic that flows from the primary commercial strip along Shattuck Avenue to the related downtown urban uses and the University Campus that is literally next door. The parcel is 50 feet wide and 125 feet deep, and the footprint of the building covers the entire property.

Character-defining features include: false-front and party-wall commercial building form; brick side walls and brick piers and parapet at the front façade; four-bay first-floor composition with an offset pair of display windows that flank a shared recessed entrance and separate driveway bay; four-bay upper-wall composition with cantilevered two-story bay windows; original downstairs storefronts, including large plate-glass display windows topped by multi-lite transoms, two angled entrances with original single-lite wood doors and multi-lite transoms and related sidelights, as well as mosaic tile flooring; dentil trim at the base of the bay windows, and a classical cornice that consists of a ribbed fascia, simple modillion blocks, and a row of dentils; flat-board band at the top and bottom of the bay windows and the spandrel panels at the center; fire escape; exposed vent stacks. Alterations include aluminum replacement units at the bay windows; an aluminum apartment door replacement, and the bulkhead materials at the display windows. The driveway gate also appears to be recent.

The historic elements of the building are in very good condition.

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View facing southeast.

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DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

Primary #  
HRI #

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\*NRHP Status Code 5B

\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Underwood Building

B1. Historic Name: Underwood Building

B2. Common Name: None

B3. Original use: Mixed-use residential/commercial

B4. Present Use: Mixed-use residential/commercial

\*B5. Architectural Style: Neoclassical

\*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

Constructed 1905 (August 23, 1905 permit-BAHA files, *Daily Pacific Builder*, 8/23/1905).

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

\*B8. Related Features:

None

B9a Architect: F. E. Armstrong b. Builder: Unknown

\*B10. Significance: Theme Commerce and Architecture Area Downtown Berkeley

Period of Significance 1905-1958 Property Type Mixed use Applicable Criteria A (1), C (3)

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

The Underwood Building/Virginia Apartments building at 2110-2114 Addison St. was constructed in 1905 by Berkeley designer/contractor F.E. Armstrong. It is located on the northerly portion of Lot 7 of Map No. 1 of the Blake Tract.

The three-story brick building was constructed for Byron E. Underwood. Underwood, a California native born in Redwood City in 1861, arrived in Berkeley in his teens in the 1870s, and began working as an apprentice in the plumbing trade. By the 1880s, he was engaged as a journeyman, and opened his own plumbing business in West Berkeley in 1884. He married Florence Liftchild, an Oakland resident in 1885, and the couple had eight children. Underwood served on the Berkeley Board of Trustees for three years in the early 1890s, and was a founding stockholder in the Bank of West Berkeley.

In 1904, Underwood was operating his successful plumbing business out of a storefront on Shattuck Avenue. The small space proved to be inadequate for his needs, so he purchased the subject lot within the Blake Tract on Addison Street and moved his business to his new building in 1905.

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B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP6. 1-3 story commercial building

\*B12. References:

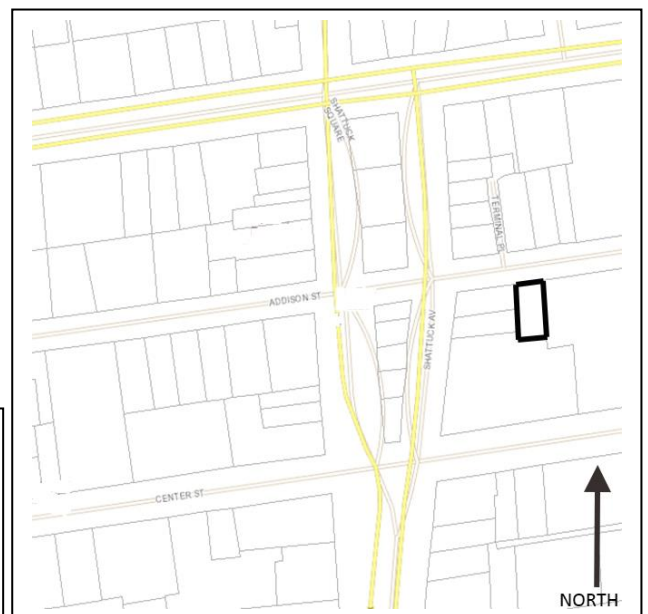
(See page 5)

B13. Remarks: Proposed historic district

\*B14. Evaluator: Franklin Maggi

\*Date of Evaluation: March 2, 2015

(This space reserved for official comments.)



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\*Recorded by Franklin Maggi, Leslie Dill, & Sarah Winder \*Date 3/2/2015  Continuation  Update

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The first floor of the building contained two retail locations, and the upper floors contained residential apartments. Underwood initially occupied both first floor areas, with one serving as his plumbing business's headquarters, while the other space was utilized as a galvanized iron workshop. The apartments located above his plumbing business were originally knowns at the Virginia Apartments, but by 1924 became known as the Addison Street Apartments.

Various other occupants of the storefronts over the years have included Wetzel Brothers, California Photographic Apparatus Co. in the 1920s, and Zelma McDonough School of Dance and Myriam Toles Marionettes in the 1930s.

Addison Street extended through Shattuck Avenue until the 1920s when Shattuck Square was developed. The building boom that Shattuck Avenue and the surrounding area experienced during the first decades of the twentieth century expanded the core commercial area. The development grouping of the historic Studio Building at the corner of Shattuck Avenue, the Heywood Building across the street from the Underwood Building, and the adjacent Chase Building on Shattuck Avenue form a substantial and intact grouping of large mixed-use multi-story buildings at this portion of downtown Berkeley.

#### **Integrity**

The Underwood Building has integrity of location and setting in Downtown Berkeley, integrity of design, recessed ground floor entrance and cantilevered upstairs bay window materials, original brick and decorative workmanship, as well as visual associations with commercial and residential Berkeley from the early 1900s. It continues to be readily identifiable as a historic building within the greater downtown core.

#### **Prior Surveys**

The property was surveyed in 1978, and found eligible for the National Register and listed by the State Historic Preservation Officer with a status code of 3S (appears eligible). In 1993, Anthony Bruce nominated the property for Landmark status. The property was subsequently designated a Structure of Merit by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on November 1, 1993.

#### **Evaluation**

The building is historically significant due to its association with important patterns of development in the downtown core. The property has previously been found individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and therefore the California Register of Historical Resources.

The property remains a primary Contributor to the establishment of a commercial historic district in the greater Shattuck Avenue area. The building continues to represent, at the street, commercial forms and materials that were prominent in the downtown during the period of historical significance for this building; from 1905-1958. The form and detailing of both the building and its commercial storefront at the first level maintains an important link to the past of downtown Berkeley.

#### **(Continued from DPR523, Section B12, References)**

Berkeley Building permit, 8/23/1904.

*Berkeley Gazette*, 13 Dec. 1904. 11/11/1905.

Bruce, Anthony,

Historical Resources Survey, 8/1978.

Application Requesting Designation for Landmark Status, 9/17/1979.

Cerny, S.D., *Berkeley Landmarks*, 1994.

Guinn, J.M., *History of the State of California and biographical record of Oakland and environs*, 1907.