



L A N D M A R K S  
P R E S E R V A T I O N  
C O M M I S S I O N

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S T A F F R E P O R T

FOR COMMISSION ACTION  
AUGUST 5, 2010

## 1545 Dwight Way

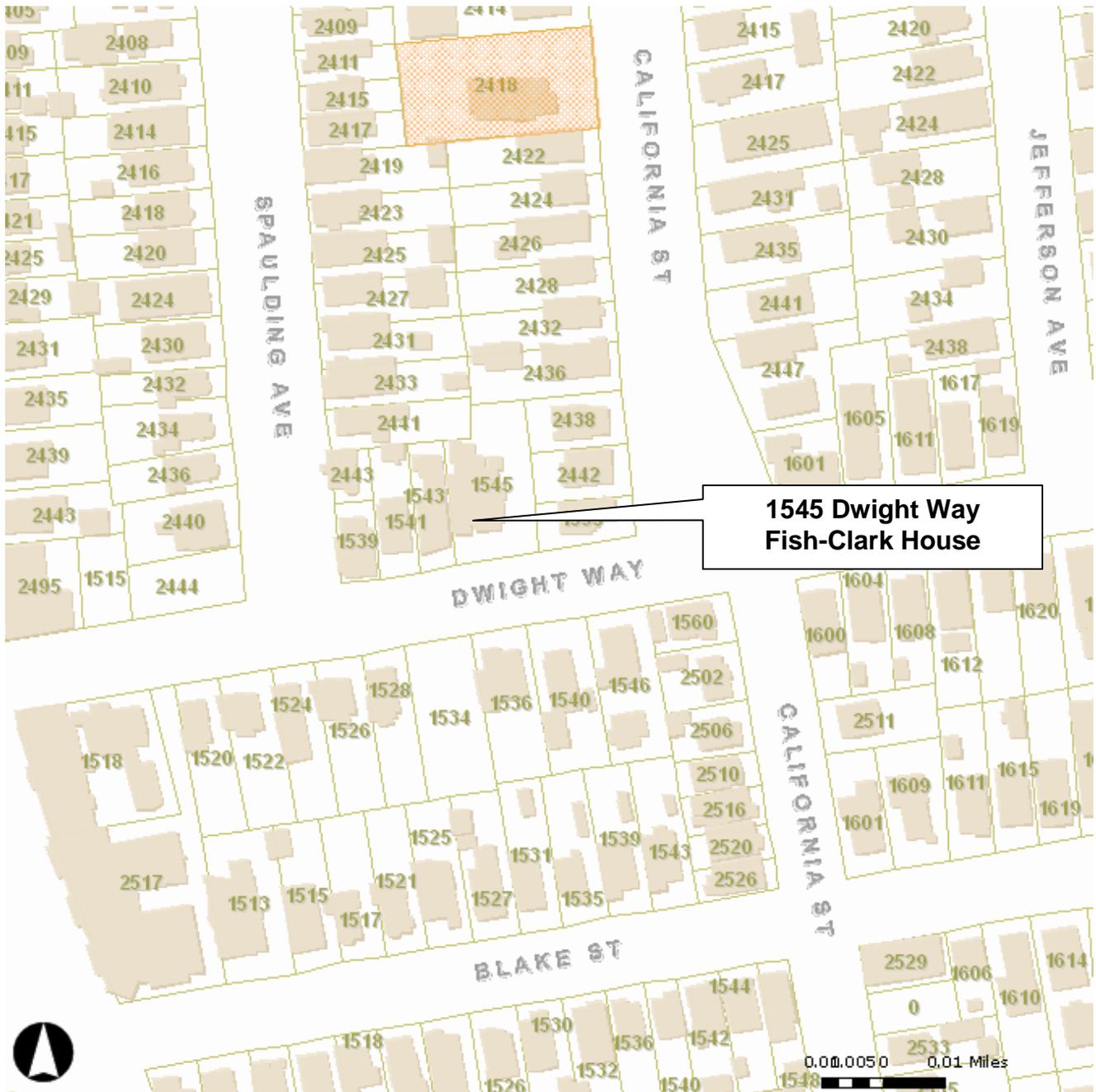
### I. Application Basics

**A. CEQA Determination:** Categorically exempt pursuant to Section 15308 (Actions by Regulatory Agencies for the Protection of the Environment) of the CEQA Guidelines.

#### B. Parties Involved:

- Applicants
  - Lynne Davis  
2117 Roosevelt Ave  
Berkeley, CA 94703
  - Pat Edwards  
2432 California Street  
Berkeley, CA 94703
- Property Owner
  - Dwight Spaulding, LLC  
1730 Franklin Street  
Oakland, CA 94612

Figure 1: Vicinity Map



Hatched shading indicates landmarked properties.

## II. Background

On February 3, 2010 the property at 1545 Dwight Way was initiated by public petition with more than 50 verified signatures and the property owner representative was notified. On July 20, 2010, a Landmark Designation Application was submitted and a public hearing was set for August 5, 2010, for consideration of the property as a City of Berkeley Landmark.

## III. Property Description

The property (APN No. 055-1913-052) is located at 1545 Dwight Way, on the north side of the street in the middle of the block between California Street and Spaulding Avenue. The parcel is generally rectilinear in shape, but the eastern half is somewhat deeper than the western half of the parcel. The property line on the west side is approximately 111 feet while the property line on the east side is approximately 125 feet. The house is sited such that there is only a marginal sideyard on the west side. On the east side of the house, there is a twenty-plus wide sideyard. The side and rear yard area is fenced and inaccessible to the public. A low, approximately three foot high open paling fence separates the approximately fifteen to twenty foot front setback from the public sidewalk. On the west side, a narrow driveway leads down to a basement level garage space.

The building was initially constructed in 1883, as documented in the Landmark Application report, and is one of a diminishing number of Stick-Style Victorians of considerable integrity in the City. Over time, a number of alterations to the exterior have been made that compromise the integrity of the architecture, most of which are only slightly visible from the street. These intrusions based on an initial observation include:

- Awkward garage door constructed on west edge of front elevation for basement space converted to accommodate off-street vehicular parking;
- Additional entry from the front porch to accommodate second unit that is an awkward contrast with the primary entry door and transom;
- Attic level deck and exit stairs on north east corner of the rear portion;
- Roof top observation platform; and
- Attic level, glazed dormer added to an east facing portion of the rear roof.

## IV. Nomination

Refer to the nomination materials for a complete description of the building's architecture and a detailed discussion of the building's history. Below is a brief summary of the nomination materials.

Description of architecture (excerpts from the nomination application):

The Fish-Clark House is a fine example of a Stick Style Victorian with an expansive front porch extending across much of the south-facing front façade. It is wood-frame construction with two stories and an attic. The front exterior elevation is the most elaborate, with scoll-sawn ornamentation framing the porch, a regular pattern of dentils, a prominent front two-story square bay, a repeating rhythm of large rectangular windows and a typically outlined roofline with projecting eaves. Decorative railings frame both the front porch and the second floor outdoor balcony. The left side (west facing) has two rectangular bay windows on each floor, and the right side (east facing) has polygonal bay windows on each floor. There have been a number of alterations over time: the most intrusive are the changes to the back roof line and an addition to the second floor on the northeastern corner. In the 1970s, a small enclosed deck was added to one section of the roof.

The architect and builder, Alphonso H. Broad, is one of the City's earliest design-build contractors. He often worked as the builder for some of the early architects of note at the turn of the century in the City and region, including Bernard Maybeck.

Historic Significance:

The property is significant for its association with the City's evolving development pattern. The parcel was initially a large part of the Spaulding Tract, which was created in 1876. This Tract extended between California and Sacramento Streets from Dwight Way to Addison Street. At that time, what would become the City of Berkeley was occupied by two well established settlements separated by more than a mile of fields, pastures and marshlands: the Spaulding Tract and the McGee Tract (the area between California Street and Martin Luther King Way—formerly Grove). These tracts were still farmland and most of the lots created from them were large parcels being held for future development. In the interim, they typically were farmed by absentee owners. These large parcels are sometimes referred to as mini-farms and are a characteristic of the history of many of the evolving east bay communities. The lower eight acres of the Spaulding Tract was divided in 1883 and the eastern four acres sold to A.C. Fish of San Francisco. This acreage became the site for the house at what is now 1545 Dwight Way.

Social Significance:

A number of individuals of local and regional significance have been associated with the Fish-Clark house over the last approximately one-hundred and thirty years, as discussed in the landmark application. For a short time, the house was occupied by its commissioner, A.C. Fish (retired sea captain who made his fortune sailing around the Cape). The house was bought shortly thereafter by William and Lillie Clark who owned the Pacific Spring and mattress Company in San Francisco. As the property was further subdivided over the years, the house was sold numerous times and, by the 1920s, was made into six apartments and maintained for rental use by absentee landlords.

Beginning in the early 1960s, there were a series of owners of some note who lived in one or more of the six units while maintaining the remainder as rentals. Between 1961

and 1971, Ralph Anspach and a fellow graduate student were resident owners who invented the game of "Antimonopoly." In 1971, Peter Clark, who was the head of an alternative energy research group called the Village of Arts and Ideas, bought the house and, over the ensuing years with various members of the group, converted the house back to a single unit. The house became known as a "commune" and was associated strongly with the Community Memory Project and other early aspects of the development and use of the personal computer and electronic media technology.

In 1980, the house was sold to Bernard T. Adeney, who established a Christian religious community in residence which was called "The Ark." It was a protestant, evangelical, ecumenical, independent and non-sectarian organization which was unofficially related to a coalition of Christian ministries which operated a variety of social outreach programs and activist organizations. These programs included: The Crucible, which later became New College Berkeley; Radix Magazine; Spiritual Counterfeits Project; Dwight House (a ministry for the homeless); Street theater; and Daystar Ranch for drug rehabilitation. Other counterculture activist programs included an early anti-nuclear movement which also was connected with Pacific Life Community. The leaders of this latter group were Daniel and Phil Berrigan. From 2002 to early 2010, the house was used as an adult residency and treatment facility operated by the non-profit STEPS Inc. (Sobriety Through Education and Peer Support) program which at various times may have up to 20 resident clients.

## V. Analysis

To designate a property as a landmark, historic district, or structure of merit, the LPC must find that the property meets one or more of the criteria delineated in Landmarks Preservation Ordinance (LPO) Section 3.24.110. The ordinance criteria regarding landmarks and historic districts are as follows:

1. Architectural merit:
  - a. Property that is the first, last, only or most significant architectural property of its type in the region;
  - b. Properties that are prototypes of or outstanding examples of periods, styles, architectural movements or construction, or examples of the more notable works or the best surviving work in a region of an architect, designer or master builder;
  - c. Architectural examples worth preserving for the exceptional values they add as part of the neighborhood fabric.
2. Cultural value: Structures, sites and areas associated with the movement or evolution of religious, cultural, governmental, social and economic developments of the City;
3. Educational value: Structures worth preserving for their usefulness as an educational force;

4. Historic value: Preservation and enhancement of structures, sites and areas that embody and express the history of Berkeley/Alameda County/California/United States. History may be social, cultural, economic, political, religious or military;
5. Any property which is listed on the National Register described in Section 470A of Title 16 of the United States Code.

### ***Landmarks Preservation Ordinance Designation Criteria***

The nomination for the house and property at 1545 Dwight Way (Fish-Clark House) is evaluated pursuant to the relevant LPO criteria below.

***1a) Architectural merit: Property that is the first, last, only or most significant architectural property of its type in the region.***

The application states that the Fish-Clark House is a fine example of a Stick Style Victorian, adapted to the farmland that once surrounded it.

Staff conclusion: The nomination does represent the house as an example of an early style of Victorian architecture. The detailing of the front elevation is described as “nearly pristine” and includes intact elements of the Victorian Stick style that have been lost or compromised on some of the few other remaining examples in the City. It is noted as being the earliest known examples of the work of A.H. Broad, designer, builder, artist, and civic leader in the early years of the City.

***1b) Architectural merit: Properties that are prototypes of or outstanding examples of periods, styles, architectural movements or construction, or examples of the more notable works or the best surviving work in a region of an architect, designer or master builder;***

The nomination documents the house as being a remnant of what was once a typical “Victorian mini-farm,” a working farm on a small scale run by a businessman or independently wealthy person with hired help. It was one of a few multi-acre properties that comprised the subdivision known as the “Spaulding Tract” and, as such is a reference to an early development pattern that defines the westerly portion of the City. Apart from the large main house, there is no visual record of the farm use or extended acreage.

The nomination also provides expanded information on the architect and builder, Alphonso Herman Broad, one of the City’s earliest building contractor and designer. The Fish-Clark House is the earliest known surviving A.H. Broad building in Berkeley. The A.H. Broad House (2117-2119 Kittredge Street), which he also designed (1894), and where he lived for many years is a designated City Landmark. Broad came to Berkeley from Maine in 1877 and had his shop and

office on Shattuck Avenue near Addison Street. He became well known throughout the East Bay for his "Eastlake cottages" and, over the years was associated with an evolving series of architectural styles. Reportedly, he often worked as the contractor for Bernard Maybeck's projects. Broad also was an early Civic Leader, and is a significant figure in the local history of the City. For example, his position as Town Marshall and Town Engineer at the age of 27 in 1887, when he first came to the City, was based on his ability to effectively remove rubbish and animal carcasses left rotting in the streets, and to correct such problems as cows and dogs running wild and home additions built on sidewalks. He was instrumental in improving public health through an ordinance establishing the first dog pound, the location of cesspools and pit privies, regular beach cleanups and the construction of sanitary sewerage underneath the City's principal streets. After the 1906 earthquake, he became the superintendent for the reconstruction of Berkeley schools. Broad also was a painter whose works are part of the Oakland Museum collection of early California artists.

Staff Conclusion: The building appears to qualify as a Landmark under these criteria.

**2) Cultural value:** *Structures, sites and areas associated with the movement or evolution of religious, cultural, governmental, social and economic developments of the City.*

Under this section of the nomination the property qualifies for significance for its association with A.H. Broad and with activist groups of the 1960s and 1970s

Staff Conclusion: The various individuals and organizations that owned and/or occupied the property and building are closely tied to many of the ideals, social movements and activities that have come to characterize an important aspect of the City of Berkeley. Therefore, the property appears to meet this criterion.

**3) Educational value:** *Structures worth preserving for their usefulness as an educational force.*

Staff conclusion: This criterion is quite broad in that educational force is not comprehensively defined. However, the building's association with university graduate students and individuals important to the early development of information technology would appear to qualify the property for meeting the criteria for educational value.

**4) Historic value:** *Preservation and enhancement of structures, sites and areas that embody and express the history of Berkeley/Alameda County/California/United States. History may be social, cultural, economic, political, religious or military.*

Staff conclusion: The age and condition of the building serve to make it a character defining component of the Spaulding/McGee portion of the City. The association with an architect who is a highly prominent representative of the early period of Berkeley architecture and construction, as well as with the early operation of City government makes the building an important aspect of the City's history. Therefore, the building meets the criteria for historic value.

## VI. Recommendation

The LPO criteria are considerably broad when applied to properties that have cultural, educational or historic value as well as architectural merit based on age. The property at 1545 Dwight Way could potentially be designated a City Landmark based on several of the LPO criteria, as discussed above in the staff analysis. Therefore, staff believes that the Commission may designate the building as a Landmark because it meets the following LPO criteria:

- 1a) As a representative example of an early and disappearing period and style of residential design in the City.
- 1b) Association with an architect or builder of local and regional significance; and
- 2) Association with significant aspects of the City's social and educational history;

The building's architectural features are described in the nomination section above and more fully in the nomination application. If the Commission decides to designate the building as a Landmark, it should specify the buildings significant architectural features. In addition, the Commission should identify those elements of the current building that constitute intrusions which compromise the integrity of the architecture of the historic period or style.

Staff recommends that the Commission open the public hearing, receive public testimony, and based on the written and oral evidence direct staff to return with a Notice of Decision consistent with the Commission's determination.

### Attachments:

1. Landmark Designation Application, received July 20, 2010.
2. Public Hearing Notice

**Staff Planner:** Jay Claiborne, Senior Planner (510) 981-7429