

ATTACHMENT 1

DRAFT FINDINGS

JULY 7, 2016

2910-12 Telegraph Avenue

City of Berkeley Landmark Application LMIN#2016-0001

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

City Landmark Designation of property located at 2910-12 Telegraph Avenue

CEQA FINDINGS

The project is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA, Public Resources Code §21000, et seq.) pursuant to Section 15061.b.3 of the CEQA Guidelines (activities that can be seen with certainty to have no significant effect on the environment).

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION ORDINANCE FINDINGS

Pursuant to Berkeley Municipal Code Section 3.24.110.A the Landmarks Preservation Commission of the City of Berkeley finds:

Consistent with Section 3.24.110A.1.a., the Ali & Marion Yazdi Building is worth preserving for its architectural merit. It is the only Storybook Style building on Berkeley's stretch of Telegraph Avenue.

Consistent with Section 3.24.110A.1.b., the Yazdi Building is a fine example of Storybook-style architecture, notable for its complex massing, steep gable roofs, dormer gables, picturesque brick chimneys, and multi-paned steel-sash windows. It is one of only two solo projects in Berkeley by the notable architect William I. Garren, the other one being his own home (1927) at 2573 Buena Vista Way. The Yazdi Building is also Garren's only mixed-use building in Berkeley and the last one he designed here.

The Yazdi Building is also an excellent example of how the Storybook Style was adapted to the economic constraints of the Great Depression, retaining the overall whimsical character of the style but employing less expensive materials and/or construction techniques. For example, instead of using brick for exterior walls, textured stucco was used, with elements of brick trim. Instead of masonry construction, the building is wood-framed, but detailed to resemble an older masonry structure, with deep doorway embrasures and window reveals. Instead of slate or tile, composition shingles that resembled flat tiles were used for the roof.

Consistent with Section 3.24.110A.1.c., the Yazdi Building makes an exceptional contribution to the neighborhood fabric, lending distinction and charm to Telegraph Avenue. As a residentially scaled structure, it relates well to its immediate residential neighbors; the building was carefully and creatively designed to “turn the corner” from a commercial frontage on Telegraph Ave. to the residential frontage on Howe Street. It is part of a rare completely original and intact block and block-face on Telegraph Avenue; the block-face retains all of its original buildings, none dating from later than the early 1940s.

Consistent with Section 3.24.110A.4., the Yazdi Building possesses historic value. The building was designed as the home and business of Ali M. Yazdi and his wife, Marion Carpenter Yazdi, who owned a Persian carpet and gift shop. Ali M. Yazdi was a well-known Bahá'í lecturer and writer, served on many national committees of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States and was, for thirty years, chairman of the Bahá'í Spiritual Assembly of Berkeley. Marion Carpenter Yazdi was the first Bahá'í student at the University of California and a noted speaker and writer in her own right. Together, they are important figures in the development of ethnic and religious multiculturalism in 20th-century Berkeley.

The building also served as the home of Margery Carpenter, a leading Berkeley social worker who was for many years the executive secretary of the City of Berkeley's Commission of Public Charities.

The Yazdi Building is also notable for having been home to an almost continuous succession of design-oriented businesses over a period of nearly eight decades, from 1933 to 2015. 2910–12 Telegraph Avenue Landmark Application, Page 61 of 61 The Yazdi Building retains integrity of location, design, materials, feeling, and association. Recent small alterations to the exterior street façades are all reversible, and other changes to the building have been concentrated in interior or rear areas, not visible from the street

The property at 2910-12 Telegraph Avenue is hereby designated a City of Berkeley Landmark; and

The distinguishing exterior features of the Yazdi Building include:

- **Complex massing** comprising a showroom wing and a residential wing
- **Open plaza** at southeast corner with magnolia tree planted by Bernice Ellis
- **Steep gable roofs** with open eaves, bargeboards & bullnosed brackets
- **Two cross-gables** with corner windows on north & south of the showroom wing
- **Garage/playroom/gallery** north of the showroom wing
- **Dogleg roofline** with open eaves, bargeboards & bullnosed brackets on residential wing
- **Two unpainted brick chimneys** with Venturi caps
- **Two steep-roofed dormers** on east side of residential wing
- **Roofing materials selected to recall slate or tile**

- **Textured stucco walls** with decorative scoring
- **Multi-paned steel-sash windows** of various types and dimensions, with brick or wooden sills
- **Embedded wooden beams** above showroom corner windows
- **Clay pipe and clay tile vents** in gable walls
- **Two curlicued wrought-iron sign mounts** flanking main showroom window
- **Original metal downspouts** (now disconnected from drainpipes) on south & east façades
- **Horizontal brick row** under vents in showroom's south cross-gable
- **Arched door openings** in entrances to showroom and ground-floor unit
- **Door to ground-floor unit**, with vertical wavy grooves and a rectangular peephole with a curlicued wrought-iron screen
- **Presence of exterior staircase** along south wall of showroom and **balcony** on east wall of residential wing
- **Cement pathways and planter beds** along the street façades

Features previously removed that could be replicated

- Original exterior doors to showroom & upstairs apartment
- Eight pairs of rustic wooden shutters on Howe Street façade
- Columnar evergreen plantings flanking showroom front window
- Roof-eave brackets missing from south gable of residential wing
- Embedded horizontal beam missing from south gable of residential wing
- Original character of exterior stair and balcony, including wroughtiron railing and arched trim below stairs and balcony