

The Heritage Society of Pacific Grove NEWSLETTER

Dedicated to Maintaining the Beauty and Individuality of Pacific Grove

Volume 3, Issue 5

September 2003



Ten Good Ideas from Carmel

The City of Carmel has residential design guidelines called *The Design Traditions of Carmel*. As a former Architectural Review Board member here in Pacific Grove, I was interested in how their guidelines compare with the *Architectural Review Guidelines* we use in PG. I found Carmel's guidelines to be much more comprehensive. I picked ten good ideas from their guidelines that I think would apply equally well to Pacific Grove. Each guideline is bold, and my comments are regular weight type.

1. Each site is considered part of a larger neighborhood and it should

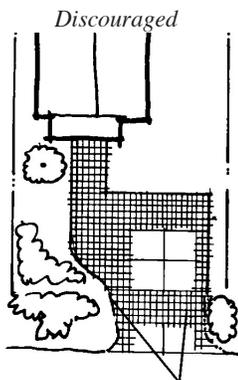
contribute to neighborhood character. Too often I have seen remodels and new construction that do not fit into the neighborhood. Compatibility with the scale and character of existing houses is important.

2. Preserve the forest character. I think PG has lost much of its forest character over the years. Carmel stresses the need to preserve both upper and lower canopy trees, and I think PG would benefit if we did the same.

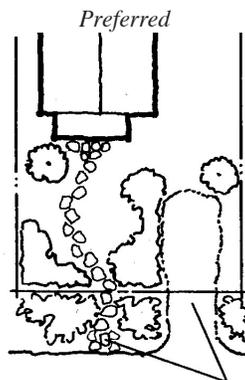
by Gary Sprader

3. Consider locating open space on a lot such that it visually links with that of adjacent properties.

This can be difficult to do, but if two adjacent houses have the open spaces on their lots next to each other, it creates a much more interesting streetscape.



A walkway and drive are combined, increasing the apparent size of paved area.



The walkway and drive are separated, reducing the apparent amount of paved area.

Idea 5. Minimize the amount of paved surface.

4. Facilities for parking should not dominate the design of the house or site. Too often with modern homes the most prominent feature of the front façade is the garage. This results in a rather uninteresting streetscape.

5. Minimize the amount of paved surface area of a driveway.

Consider using paving strips especially for long driveways.

Separate the driveway from a front walkway to reduce visual impact of paved surfaces.

Reducing the area of the paved surface in the front allows more landscaping which makes the front of the home much more attractive.

6. Use a detached garage to minimize its visual impacts. This is a great way to reduce the mass of a house.

7. A building should appear to be no more than two stories in

height as viewed from the public right-of-way. PG's method of calculating building height for sloped lots can allow buildings that appear to be more than two stories.

8. Keep building forms, materials and details simple and visually restrained.

Carmel's architectural heritage (PG's also) consists of small, simple cottages. Houses have gotten bigger, but the use of simple forms does a lot to preserve the character of the community.

9. Locate and size windows and doors to achieve a human scale while avoiding mass and privacy impacts. The use of a grand entry door or large picture window facing the street is discouraged. I am bothered by large fancy entry doors which some people put on small, otherwise simple homes.

See 10 Ideas on back page

Calendar

SEPTEMBER

4th Annual

VICTORIAN DINNER

Thursday, September 25, 2003

OCTOBER

VICTORIAN HOME TOUR

Sunday, October 5, 2003

All opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official positions of the Board of Directors, but are meant to stimulate interest in and discussion of preservation issues.

Sponsor the
Newsletter
Thank You!

Bob Davis,
Frances Grate,
and Anonymous,
"Highway 68"
already have

July's Mystery House



By Darlene Billstrom

Jean Johnson Littlepage wrote us identifying July's Mystery House. Her letter is as follows:

"I am enclosing a brief description of the 'Mystery House' in the Heritage Newsletter. We were so pleased to see this view taken earlier than some of our memorabilia. Sitting on the porch with her dog Tippy was Minnie J. Johnston, known to friends in PG and Carmel as Donnie. 244 Willow was a lovely place for our daughters, Layne Littlepage and Janni Littlepage to grow up with lots of room to play and climb trees.

The Mystery House pictured in the Heritage News[letter] was the family home of Simon and Eliza Buck Johnston at 244 Willow Street. (Both are buried in the Johnston plot at El Carmelo Cemetery as well as their children, Edwin S. and Charles K. Johnston and sister, Minnie Jane Johnston.)

Their great niece Jean Johnston Littlepage, her husband Norris, and daughters Layne and Janice lived in the house [from] 1945 to 1964, when it was razed. Seven houses, 3 facing Willow and 4 facing Cedar Street were then built on the property which formerly contained the

244 Willow house, a small cottage facing Cedar Street, a large redwood barn, a fine car garage, and a two-story 30'x60' warehouse used by Charles K. J. for his transfer and storage business. Edwin and Charles lived in the Cedar Street cottage. Minnie J. moved down from Oakland to care for her aged father, then lived at 244 Willow until her death in 1944.

Edwin S., an attorney, was the first manager of Pacific Grove Bank of America, City Clerk of Pacific Grove, an organizer of El Carmelo cemetery, and an insurance agent.

Charles K. ran the transfer and storage business, storing the furnishings of summer visitors and military personnel in the Cedar Street warehouse. A barn across Cedar Street from the warehouse barn was used for riding horses. Later purchased and used for storage by W. R. Holman."

Thank you Mrs. Littlepage for your very informative letter.

Centennial Houses Needed for Tour

Was your home built in 1903 or 1904? If so, your Historic Home Tour Committee needs you. Each year we try to include in our early October fund raiser one or two homes which are celebrating their 100 year birthday. The Committee attempts to feature homes both large and small. You can expect to get loads of positive feedback for the work done to your home.

If your home does not fall into this age category but you would consider sharing your pride and joy this year or next and help the Heritage Society make some badly needed money, contact me by e-mail or phone call me at 375-0816. Ken Hinshaw

Khinsba2@aol.com

Heritage Society to the Rescue

by Ken Hinshaw

We all know about the cuts in the City's budget. Belt tightening is taking place in all departments. In an unprecedented move the City's employees voted to cut their own salaries to help keep things afloat. In the Planning Department cuts have been drastic with one full time planning position being left unfilled. The Historic Resources Committee's staff support has been minimized, affecting the processing of structures whose historic status is uncertain. As you already know if you regularly peruse this newsletter, the Inventory of Historic Resources has never been completed.

Taking all of this into account, President Paul Finnegan and Board Member Craig Riddell met with the Planning Director to offer their help. The Planning Director felt that the Heritage Society could help by assisting in the research needed to allow the Historic Resources Committee's work on the inventory to continue.

Your Heritage Society Board will be taking steps to implement these ideas at its next meeting on September 2nd at 7:00 at the

Barn. Members are welcome to attend these monthly meetings.

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Bungalow Kev

By Ken Hinshaw

We are fortunate that Kevin Doherty and his wife Penelope have chosen Pacific Grove to be their new home after moving from Long Beach. The fortune is ours because he is a specialist in design of historic bungalow and Spanish style homes. No, he is not an architect, but rather he designs gardens, fences, porches and other details that are often missing when a bungalow is restored. This affable young (slightly younger than me) man has had his work published in "American Bungalow" magazine. Much of his design work blends Japanese traditions with the American Bungalow style. In addition to gardens and fences, he consults on colors both inside and out. His work is based on careful research of design traditions appropriate for your home.

We hope to include his talent as a public speaker in the upcoming Home Tour.

Kevin may be reached at 655-1494 and will be included in the next Resource Guide that should be out in the next few months.

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Mystery House



Where is this house?

This month's mystery house should be fairly easy to locate, since Pacific Grove only has two or three log houses. Unfortunately, because we have lost irreplaceable homes in the past, this might not be one of the existing log houses in town. All photographs of the "mystery houses" are courtesy of Pat Hathaway of California Views at 469 Pacific Street in Monterey.

Lecture Turnout Surprises

by Ken Hinsbaw

The turnout for this year's lecture series has grown over the success of last year. Professor Gray Brechin, our last speaker, commented that in San Francisco he might be able to draw only a hundred people for the lecture on Julia Morgan, Bernard Maybeck, and the Hearsts. In Pacific Grove close to 400 people turned out for that talk as well as for the previous one given by photo historians Don Anderson and Al Weber. The success of this series can be traced to the promotional efforts over several years by Darlene Billstrom and new board member, Craig Riddell of Riddell and Riddell, a local public relations firm. This year's large audiences were

mainly drawn in because of publicist Sally Aberg's ability to get features printed in the Monterey Herald at critical times. Thank you, Sally. We would like to thank the Inn at 17 Mile Drive owners Tony and Glynis Greening for their generous support of the series. Thanks to Lowell Northrop for managing the light and sound system. Also thanks to Paul Finnegan, Bob Davis, and Ted and Jan Rose, and the staff of Robert Down School for their enthusiastic help.

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Reprieve for Retreat

By Betty Aickelin & Sally Aberg

For several years a group of concerned Pagrovians have been resisting a large duplex / triplex project proposed for the former-Holman-Building parking lot on Central

Avenue between 14th and 15th Streets and on Ricketts Row at 15th Street. On July 10th a "Concerned Neighbors" contingent drove up to Petaluma to take advantage of a full Public Hearing before the California Coastal Commission. They had won this chance to speak two months earlier when the Commissioners met in Monterey and had scheduled this controversial matter as a simple consent agenda item.

After hearing from property owners and architects as well as a half dozen concerned neighbors and asking many questions, the Coastal Commissioners voted unanimously to continue the matter. They returned the duplex/triplex project to the applicants and ruled that it cannot move forward to Coastal certification without first reapplying and reappearing before the Coastal Commission with revised plans downsizing all three buildings slated for the parking lot at Central Avenue between 14th and 15th Streets.

For pointers on how the project's applicants and architects might reduce size and massing, they were encouraged to follow the suggestions offered in a letter sent to the Coastal Commission by PG Heritage Society member Gary Sprader, who happened to have made the very same suggestions to the very same applicants and architects when the project came before Sprader and his fellow board members at ARB months ago.

Sprader's letter recommends a downsizing of 40% off of the square footage of each building's upper floors. This would result in an approximately 20% reduction

in each over-all building size. That is, 540 sq. ft. off of each 2,700 sq. ft. duplex and 660 sq. ft. off of the 3,300 sq. ft. triplex. That amounts to approximately 2,160 square feet remaining for each duplex and just under 2,700 square feet for the triplex. These are only approximate figures and they are only suggestions from one resident. The applicants can choose to ignore it all and look for their own formulas to follow.

The applicants and architects were further encouraged to work with the neighbors so that any returning project meets with everyone's approval before it comes back before the Commissioners.

For a few more details on the ruling: (1) The Coastal Commission will not look at this project again until it is downsized. (2) The Coastal Commission will also not look at the project again if the lower income housing unit in the triplex is removed from the project. (3) The Coastal Commission expressed their need for absolutely, positively MORE VERIFIABLE information on the square footages of all the houses in the existing neighborhood as well as the amount of lot coverage of each of those houses in relation to the duplexes and triplex. The applicants did not supply these numbers or measurements, and their model did not convince the Commissioners.

Concerned Neighbors thanks the PG Heritage Society and residents all over Pacific Grove for helping to shine a spotlight on this critical issue by letter writing and phone calls to try and save one tiny corner of the PG Retreat. This is truly a victory for local preservation and residents alike.

New Members

Sylvia Brugman
 Bob Crispin
 Daniel Davis
 Joan DeMers
 Jean Engvall
 Noie Fitzpatrick
 Dick Goblirsch
 Lynda & Vic Johnson
 Wesley Keeler
 Pat Lewis
 Annette Lombardo
 Patricia & Daniel
 Matuszewski
 Ko & Haru Nishimura
 Tracy Pearse
 H. Rothstein
 John Tenanes
 Ellen Wall
 Rosemary Wells

Membership Count:
1066

The pleasure of your company is requested at
 the HERITAGE SOCIETY OF PACIFIC GROVE'S
 4th Annual
Victorian Dinner
 Thursday, September 25, 2003
 dinner at 7:15 p.m.
 no host bar starting at 6:30 p.m.

The Old Bath House
 620 Ocean View Boulevard
 Pacific Grove

Heritage Society Members
 \$75 donation
 Non-Members
 \$85 donation
 (\$40 tax deductible)

Call Carrol at 375-6123
 for reservations & information
 or mail checks with your reservation to:
 Heritage Society of Pacific Grove
 P.O. Box 1007
 Pacific Grove, CA 93950

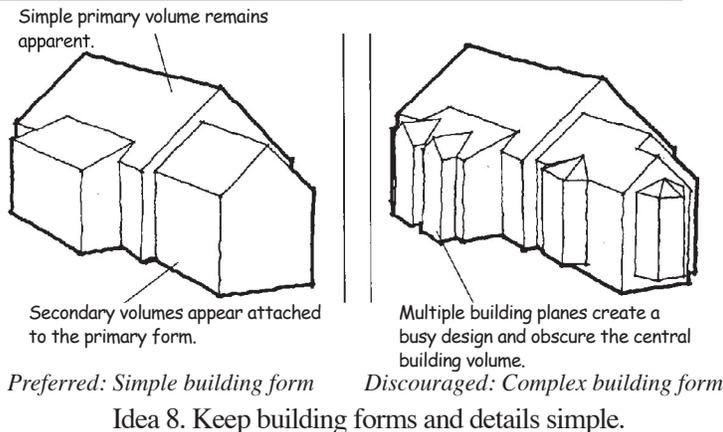
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10 Ideas Cont'd

10. Skylights should not be visually prominent from the street or from neighboring windows. Skylights are a modern innovation. I do not think they should be allowed on historic homes, but the Pacific Grove ARB sometimes allows them.

It occurred to me that most of these ideas are characteristic



Idea 8. Keep building forms and details simple.

of the design of historic homes. I think this was Carmel's intention. If you would like a copy of **The Design Traditions of Carmel** you can obtain them from the Carmel City Hall. There are two volumes, Design Concept Review and Final Detail Review. Cost is \$3 each.

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