

(Landmarks)

DESIGNATING BALBOA HIGH SCHOOL AS A LANDMARK PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 10 OF THE CITY PLANNING CODE.

Be it ordained by the People of the City and County of San Francisco:

Section 1. The Board of Supervisors hereby finds that the Balboa High School at 1000 Cayuga Avenue at Onondaga Street, Lot 1 within Assessor's Block 6958A, has a special character and special historical, architectural and aesthetic interest and value, and that its designation as a Landmark will further the purposes of, and conform to the standards set forth in Article 10 of the City Planning Code.

(a) Designation: Pursuant to Section 1004 of the City Planning Code, Chapter II, Part II of the San Francisco Municipal Code, Balboa High School is hereby designated as a Landmark No. 205. This designation having been fully approved by Resolution No. 11761 of the City Planning Commission, which Resolution is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors under File No. 90-94-1 and is incorporated herein and made a part of hereof as though fully set forth.

(b) Required Data

(1) The description of the location and boundaries of the Landmark site is 1000 Cayuga Avenue at Onondaga

Street, Lot 1 within Assessor's Block 6958A.

(2) The characteristics of the Landmark which justify its designation are described and shown in the photographs and other materials on file in the Department of City Planning Docket No. 91.312L and the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board's Case Report contained in Docket No. 91.312L.

(3) The particular features that should be preserved are those shown in the photographs on file in Department of City Planning Docket No. 91.312L and described in the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board's Case Report, in Section A, entitled "Architecture," Subsection No. 4, "Design" and in Section D, "Integrity," Subsection No. 13, "Alterations," said photographs and Case Report are incorporated in this designating ordinance as though fully set forth.

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

LOUIS H. RENNE

CITY ATTORNEY

By

*[Signature]*

Deputy City Attorney

RECOMMENDED:

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

By

Lu Blazej

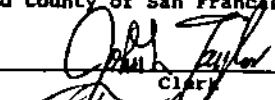
Director of Planning

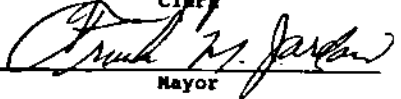
Board of Supervisors, San Francisco

Passed for Second Reading	§	Finally Passed
January 3, 1995	§	January 9, 1995
	§	
	§	
Ayes: Supervisors Alioto Amiano	§	Ayes: Supervisors Alioto Amiano
Bierman Hallinan Kaufman Kennedy	§	Bierman Hallinan Heieh Kaufman
Leal Migden Teng	§	Kennedy Leal Migden Shelley Tang
	§	
Absent: Supervisors Heieh Shelley	§	

CITY & COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

I hereby certify that the foregoing ordinance was finally passed by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Paul Taylor  
 Clerk

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Frank R. Jordan  
 Mayor

File No.  
90-94-1

JAN 20 1995

Date Approved

File No. 91.312L  
Balboa High School  
1000 Cayuga Avenue  
Lot 1 in Assessor's Block 6958A

SAN FRANCISCO  
CITY PLANNING COMMISSION  
RESOLUTION NO. 13763

WHEREAS, A proposal to designate the Balboa High School at 1000 Cayuga Avenue, Lot 1 in Assessor's Block 6958A, as Landmark No. 205 pursuant to the provisions of Article 10 of the City Planning Code; and

WHEREAS, The Landmarks Board at its Regular Meeting of November 4, 1992 after Public Testimony and Landmarks Board Comments on the above referenced nomination continued the item to the Call of the Chair indicating a lack of interest in the Balboa Alumni Association's request for Landmark initiation and indicating that a number of school sites would equally qualify for landmark designation as part of a thematic nomination; and

WHEREAS, The City Planning Commission, after due notice given, held a Public Hearing on October 6, 1994 to consider the proposed designation and the Case Report of said Landmarks Board; and

WHEREAS, This Commission believes that the proposed Landmark has a special character and special historical, architectural and aesthetic interest and value; and that the proposed designation would be in furtherance of and in conformance with the purposes and standards of the said Article 10;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, First, That this City Planning Commission does hereby recommend APPROVAL of the designation of Balboa High School, being Lot 1 within Assessor's Block 6958A;

Second, That the special character and special historical, architectural and aesthetic interest and value of the said City Planning Commission's Resolution as adopted on October 6, 1994, which Resolution is incorporated herein and made a part thereof as though fully set forth;

Third, That the particular features that should be preserved are those shown in the photographs on file in Department of City Planning Docket No. 91.312L and described in the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board's Case Report, in Section A, entitled "Architecture," Subsection No. 5, "Design" and in Section D "Integrity," Subsection No. 13 "Alterations," said photographs and Case Report are incorporated in this designating ordinance as though fully set forth.

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

File No. 91.312L  
Balboa High School  
1000 Cayuga Avenue  
Lot 1 in Assessor's Block 6958A  
Resolution No. 13763  
Page 2

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Commission hereby directs its Secretary to transmit the proposal for designation, with a copy of this Resolution, to the Board of Supervisors for appropriate action.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was APPROVED by the City Planning Commission on October 6, 1994.

Linda Avery  
Commission Secretary

AYES: Commissioners Boomer, Levine, Martin, and Prowler

NOES: Commissioners Fung and Lowenberg

ABSENT: Commissioner Unobskey

ADOPTED: October 6, 1994



# LANDMARKS PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD

1660 MISSION STREET, 5TH FLOOR, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94103

TEL. (415) 558-6345 • FAX. (415) 558-6426



FINAL CASE REPORT 6/1/94 LANDMARKS PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD

**BUILDING NAME:** Balboa High School **OWNER:** San Francisco Unified School District

**BUILDING ADDRESS:** 1000 Cayuga Avenue at Onondaga Street **BLOCK & LOT:** 6958A/1

**ORIGINAL USE:** High School **ZONING:** P (Public) OS (Open Space)

**CURRENT USE:** High School **NO. OF STORIES:** 3 **STYLE:** Spanish Colonial Revival

**LANDMARK NO:** 205 **EXTERIOR MATERIALS:** First Unit--cement plaster, cast stone, and terra cotta; Second and Third Units--cement plaster and cast stone

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:** Balboa High School represents San Francisco's "golden age" of school construction in San Francisco and is the most prominent and visible school building extant in the southern quadrant of the City. Between 1920 and 1930, 49 new school buildings were added to the School District. There were several factors responsible for this growth, including a general overall growth in the City's population, a longer period of time spent in school by pupils and changing patterns within the City. In San Francisco, school enrollment increased by 45 percent between 1920 and 1930 and the population of the city shifted to the southern and western reaches of the city. Balboa's development in three phases in four short years met the needs of an emerging population of the Excelsior during this prosperous period of the City's development designed around a central quadrangle created by a series of successive additions. It represented advanced school design emerging in California during this period which reflected the special topography and climate of the area and emphasized indoor/outdoor relationships where pupils could enjoy fresh air, recreation and sunshine in an urban setting. Balboa is a fine example of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture, made popular by the 1915 Panama-California Exhibition in San Diego, CA. The High School is comprised of three buildings, designed by prominent San Francisco architects: John Reid, Jr., Samuel Lightner Hyman and A. Appelton Associates, and Bakewell and Weihe Architects Associates. When completed in 1934, Balboa cost almost \$1.5 million to construct. The school was named for Vasco Nunez de Balboa, the Spanish explorer who discovered the Pacific Ocean.

**EVALUATION CRITERIA****A. ARCHITECTURE**

1. **Style:** Spanish Colonial Revival
2. **Construction Use/Type:** Reinforced Concrete
3. **Date Built:** First Unit (academic building and shops) 1927-28; Second Unit (Gymnasia, cafeteria, and shop addition) 1928-29; and Third Unit (academic building, auditorium, and athletic field) (1930-31).
4. **Architect:** John Reid, Jr. was responsible for the design of the first unit of Balboa High School. A native of San Francisco, Reid studied at the University of California, and then the Ecole Des Beaux Arts in Paris. Reid served as a consulting city architect from 1912-17, and then as City Architect from 1919-27. This position was controversial due to Reid's marriage to Mayor James Rolph's daughter. As City Architect, Reid left a considerable mark on the City, especially its schools. Of the 49 schools built between 1920 and 1930, Reid designed over half. Most of these schools were in the Spanish Colonial Revival or Mission Revival Styles, with the notable exception of the Beaux Arts Polytechnic High School (1915). A partial list of schools credited to Reid include Commodore Sloat School (1920), Pacific Heights Elementary School (1924), Galileo High School (1927), High School of Commerce, Landmark No. 140 (1926), John Muir Elementary School (1926), West Portal Elementary School (1927), Mission High School addition (1927), Everett Middle School (1927), and Sherman Elementary School (1927).

Reid also contributed to the design of other civic buildings, including Exposition Auditorium, the Civic Center, and San Francisco General Hospital. Other Reid designs include the Hind Building (1913), The Firehouse Engine Co. No. 8; Truck Co. No. 4, Landmark No. 188 (1917), Laguna Honda Hospital, 375 Laguna Honda Boulevard (1927), and Phi Delta Theta Chapter House, 2717 Hearst Avenue in Berkeley, CA (1914).

Samuel Lightner Hyman and A. Appelton Associates designed the Second Unit of Balboa High School and cafeteria. Other buildings by Samuel L. Hyman with A. Appleton include the original Crown Zellerbach Building, 343 Sansome Street (c. 1930); the San Francisco Jewish Community Center, 3200 California Street (1932), 1035 Market Street, (1933), 1043-1045 Market Street (1933), the Mercedes Building, 251-253 Post Street built in 1908 and rehabilitated in 1935 by the firm of Hyman and Appleton. The recently demolished Nurses' Quarters (Sutter Building) Mount Zion Hospital, 2345 Sutter Street (1924) was designed by Samuel Hyman with Sylvain Schnaittacher. Samuel L. Hyman with G. Albert Lansburgh are responsible for the Visitacion Valley School at 55 Schwerin Street (1937). Other Samuel Hyman buildings include the Jewish Home for the Aged at 302 Silver Avenue, a mortuary at the northwest corner of Divisadero and Geary Boulevard (1931) and residences at 230 Sea Cliff Avenue and at 13 Presidio Terrace. In the firm of Appelton and Wolfard; A. Appelton designed the Marina Branch Library (1955).

John Bakewell, Jr. and Ernest Weihe designed the Third Unit of Balboa High School. John Bakewell earned a degree from the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris in 1901, and then formed a partnership with Arthur Brown. Ernest Weihe graduated from the American Beaux Arts Institute in 1923, and was then employed in the firm of Bakewell and Brown. In 1928 Bakewell and Weihe formed a partnership.

Bakewell and Arthur Brown, Jr. created several prominent buildings in San Francisco. In 1915 they designed San Francisco City Hall, Landmark No. 85. They also designed the Pacific Gas and Electric Company Building, 77 Beale Street, a Category 1 Significant Building (1925), Sanchez Elementary School, 325 Sanchez Street (1926), San Francisco Art Institute, 800 Chestnut Street, Landmark No. 85 (1926), the Federal Office Building, 50 United Nations Plaza (1936) and the Green Library at Stanford University, (1919) among other buildings.

Bakewell and Ernest Weihe built the Phoenix Building at 356-360 Pine Street (1928) and contributed to the design of the Public Health Building, 101 Grove Street (1932) with Samuel J. Heiman serving as the Supervisory City Architect. Bakewell, in 1913 had been President of the State Board of Architecture for Northern California. Weihe served as a member of the Architectural Commission for the Golden Gate Exposition in 1939 and designed many of its buildings.

- 5. Design:** Although the school was designed by three separate architectural firms, it is remarkably unified due to its well executed Spanish Colonial Revival details and consistent scale and massing. The school is based on a courtyard plan. The First Unit is an L-plan consisting of the Central Academic Building, located east of the courtyard and facing Cayuga Avenue, and a Shops Building, located south of the courtyard and perpendicular to Cayuga Avenue. The Second Unit, the Gymnasium and Cafeteria Building, is located south of and parallel to the Shop Building. The Third Unit is another L-plan consisting of the Academic-Library Building located north of the courtyard along Onondaga Avenue, and the Auditorium Building and Shops Addition located west of the courtyard along Otsego Avenue. The two Ls of the First and Third Units together form the perimeter of the courtyard. While the Second Unit is not part of the courtyard it is connected to the First Unit by a colonnaded arcade which mirrors the arcade connecting the First and Third units. Details include cast stone and terra cotta corbels, terra cotta floral patterns along the cornice line, and arabesque grillwork along the arcades. The Second Unit is entered through a blind arcade, with rounded arches supported by double columns and carved capitals. This pattern is repeated in the window screens of the second story. The Third Unit has a unique series of superimposed pediments, with intricately decorated arches.

The design for Balboa High School (1927-1931) strongly resembles both Mission and Galileo High Schools, particularly the former. The central block features a great arched opening and two flanking wings, perpendicular to the central building. The cream colored stucco Complex C includes numerous Spanish Colonial Revival features, such as arcaded passageways and Romanesque capitals which are stylized in the Art Deco manner more than either Mission or Galileo High Schools. One of the building's most interesting features is the series of superimposed pediments on the north wing (Third Unit).

- 6. Interior:** Balboa's publicly accessible interior is beautifully detailed. While some elements have been removed for earthquake safety, it still retains rich ornamentation. The main stair case is covered in geometrically patterned tiles imported from Italy. Terra cotta moldings outlines are evident in the hallways; doors and windows are of oak wood.

**B. HISTORIC CONTEXT**

7. **Persons:** When Balboa High School opened in August, 1928, there were 653 students and 23 teachers. Since then over 40,000 students have graduated from Balboa High School, including Superior Court Judge Don Mitchell, Calvin Simmons, late Director of the Oakland Symphony; Science Fiction writer, Forrest Ackerman and Jerry Garcia of the Grateful Dead. Over the years the population of the surrounding area has changed, thus changing the student population at Balboa. Initially inhabitants of the Excelsior were mainly Italian and Irish; in the 1960s the ethnic make-up changed to include more Latino and Filipinos, who moved to the Excelsior from the Mission District.
8. **Events:** None associated
9. **Patterns of History:** Balboa High School was constructed during the "golden age" of school construction in San Francisco. Between 1920 and 1930, 49 schools were built to accommodate the changing population of San Francisco. Not only was the overall population of the city growing, but more students were also staying in school through high school. The pattern of the city was changing as well, the population was moving southward into previously undeveloped land. As a result the school board reworked its policies towards building schools. In 1922, a \$12 million bond was passed to support school construction.

Balboa High School and its unique campus-like setting are a product of these policy changes. Located in the Excelsior District, Balboa --originally called South High School--served the newly developing southern districts of the Outer-Mission. Its interior courtyard, large front yard and ample athletic fields were the result of the Board of Education's goal of providing more space for physical education and recreation than was available in the older schools in more densely populated areas. Furthermore, at the same time, California as a state was noted for its advanced school design, including outdoor spaces that could be used as classrooms, such as Balboa's courtyard.

The high school serves as a center for community pride, as well. The Balboa Alumni Association is one of the largest and most active high school Alumni Association on the West Coast, with many of its members returning year-after-year for reunions. Furthermore, Balboa's students have traditionally served the community through such activities as blood drives and fund-raisers to feed hungry and homeless people.

**C. PHYSICAL CONTEXT**

10. **Continuity:** Balboa High School has been a continuous presence in the Excelsior community since it first opened in 1928. Its athletic fields provide open space and recreation for the surrounding neighborhood.
11. **Setting:** Balboa has a unique campus-like feel because of its courtyard plan and large open spaces, which is seen in very few other schools in the City. Furthermore, James Denman Middle School and San Miguel Elementary School are all located in the same block and share facilities. The schools are surrounded by low-scale single family detached housing. The yards of Balboa are landscaped with stately palm trees, California poppies, and large planters.
12. **Visual Landmark:** Balboa can be seen from the hills that surround the Excelsior District. James Denman Middle School and San Miguel Elementary School are all located in the same block and share facilities. The schools are surrounded by low-scale single family detached housing. The yards of Balboa are landscaped with stately palm trees, California poppies, and large planters.



**D. INTEGRITY**

13. Both the interior and exterior of the school have had some of the more ornate elements removed in order to protect students from earth quake hazards, including red tile roofing and tile work around arch of the main entrance.

**E. THREATS TO SITE**  None  DVLPMT  ZONING  VANDALISM  PUBLIC WORKS

**F. EXISTING SURVEYS**

**DCP:** 2

**HERE TODAY:** N/A

**SPLENDID SURV.:** N/A

**NAT'L REGISTER:** N/A

**NAT'L LANDMARK:** N/A

**STATE LANDMARK:** Proposed

**BIBLIOGRAPHY** page 5.

**STAFF:** Vincent Marsh, Secretary  
Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board  
1660 Mission Street, 5th Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94103

**PHONE:** 558-6345, 558-6409 (FAX)

**DATE:** June 1, 1994

Prepared by Solange Russek, Balboa High School Alumni Association and Elizabeth Wilcox, Graduate Intern, Department of City Planning, University of Virginia and Adrienne Cowden, Graduate Department of City Planning Intern, Cornell University.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Ambrose, William Clement. "Low Cost School Construction of San Francisco," The American Architect. January 20, 1926, 107-112.

Annual Report, San Francisco Public Schools, "A Review of Accomplishments - Report of the Superintendent," 1930.

Burtee, Muriel, et. al. San Francisco District Handbook. (San Francisco) Coro Foundation. (1976). p. 160, 232.

"Civic Architecture: San Francisco's Public Schools," Heritage Newsletter. Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage. 16:2(5-8).

Corbett, Michael. Splendid Survivors. San Francisco's Downtown Architectural Heritage, (San Francisco) Living Books. 1979 pgs. 96, 193, 217, 229.

Delehanty, Randolph. The Ultimate Guide, San Francisco, San Francisco, Chronicle Books, 1989.

Gebhard David, et. al. A Guide to Architecture in San Francisco and Northern California. (Santa Barbara) Pergrine and Smith. 1976. p. 19, 38, 54, 71, 76, 80, 81, 87, 90, 96, 101, 153, 253, 255, 457, 513.

Hill, Jr. Andrew P., "The Architecture of California Schools," Pacific Coast Architect, Volume XXXIII, January 1929, p. 11-15, 30.

Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board, Final Case Report: High School of Commerce. Landmark No. 140, adopted 1981.

Palmer, Emily Powell. "Balboa Alumni Association First in the Pacific," Galeon: Balboa High School Alumni Association Newsletter. October 1990.

San Francisco Board of Education. Report of the Reviewing Committee on the Reorganization and Housing Program, San Francisco Schools. May 5, 1924.

A Review of Accomplishments: Report of the Superintendent, 1930. List of School Sites and Buildings.

Schwarzer, Mitchell. An Inquiry into the Architectural and Historic Importance of Polytechnic High School. San Francisco Department of City Planning. February 7, 1885.

Whiffen, Marcus. American Architecture Since 1790: A Guide to Styles. (Cambridge, MA) MIT Press. 1981. p 225-228.

Woodbridge, Sally B. and John. Architecture: San Francisco. (San Francisco) 101 Productions. 1982. p. 31, 70, 101, 103, 118, 119, 124, 133, 148, 175.

"World's Fair Builder's --Ernest Weihe," Architect and Engineer. June 1938, pgs. 47-48.