

1 [Planning Code - Landmark Designation - 35-45 Onondaga Avenue (aka Alemany Emergency  
2 Hospital and Health Center)]

3 **Ordinance designating 35-45 Onondaga Avenue (aka Alemany Emergency Hospital and**  
4 **Health Center), Assessor's Parcel Block No. 6956, Lot Nos. 016 and 017, as a Landmark**  
5 **under Planning Code, Article 10; and making environmental findings, findings of public**  
6 **necessity, convenience and welfare, and findings of consistency with the General Plan,**  
7 **and the eight priority policies of Planning Code, Section 101.1.**

8 NOTE: **Unchanged Code text and uncodified text** are in plain Arial font.  
9 **Additions to Codes** are in *single-underline italics Times New Roman font*.  
10 **Deletions to Codes** are in *strikethrough italics Times New Roman font*.  
11 **Board amendment additions** are in double-underlined Arial font.  
12 **Board amendment deletions** are in ~~strikethrough Arial font~~.  
13 **Asterisks (\* \* \* \*)** indicate the omission of unchanged Code  
14 subsections or parts of tables.

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

16 (a) Pursuant to Section 4.135 of the Charter of the City and County of San  
17 Francisco, the Historic Preservation Commission has authority "to recommend approval,  
18 disapproval, or modification of landmark designations and historic district designations under  
19 the Planning Code to the Board of Supervisors."

20 (b) On May 20, 2015, following the submittal of a community sponsored Application  
21 for Historic Landmark Designation, the Historic Preservation Commission added 35-45  
22 Onondaga Avenue (aka Alemany Emergency Hospital and Health Center), Lots 016 and 017  
23 in Assessor's Block No. 6956, to the Landmark Designation Work Program.

24 (c) Planning Department staff Jonathan Lammers, who meets the Secretary of  
25 Interior's Professional Qualification Standards, reviewed the Application for Historic Landmark  
Designation for 35-45 Onondaga Avenue, dated October 5, 2015. This Application for Historic

1 Landmark Designation was also reviewed by Timothy Frye, Department staff, for accuracy  
2 and conformance with the purposes and standards of Article 10.

3 (d) The Historic Preservation Commission, at its regular meeting of February 17,  
4 2016, reviewed Department staff's analysis of 35-45 Onondaga Avenue's historical  
5 significance per Article 10 as part of the Landmark Designation Case Report dated February  
6 17, 2016.

7 (e) On February 17, 2016, the Historic Preservation Commission passed Resolution  
8 No. 758, initiating designation of 35-45 Onondaga Avenue (aka Alemany Emergency Hospital  
9 and Health Center), Lots 016 and 017 in Assessor's Block No. 6956, as a San Francisco  
10 Landmark pursuant to Section 1004.1 of the San Francisco Planning Code. Such motion is  
11 on file with the Clerk of the Board in File 160293 and incorporated herein by reference.

12 (f) On March 16, 2016, after holding a public hearing on the proposed designation  
13 and having considered the specialized analyses prepared by Planning Department staff and  
14 the Landmark Designation Case Report, the Historic Preservation Commission recommended  
15 approval of the proposed landmark designation of 35-45 Onondaga Avenue (aka Alemany  
16 Emergency Hospital and Health Center), Lots 016 and 017 in Assessor's Block No. 6956, in  
17 Resolution No. 759. Such resolution is on file with the Clerk of the Board in File No. 160293.

18 (g) Pursuant to Planning Code Section 302, the Board of Supervisors finds that the  
19 proposed landmark designation of 35-45 Onondaga Avenue (aka Alemany Emergency  
20 Hospital and Health Center), Lots 016 and 017 in Assessor's Block No. 6956, will serve the  
21 public necessity, convenience and welfare.

22 (h) The Board finds that the proposed landmark designation of 35-45 Onondaga  
23 Avenue (aka Alemany Emergency Hospital and Health Center), Lots 016 and 017 in  
24 Assessor's Block No. 6956, is consistent with the San Francisco General Plan and with  
25 Planning Code Section 101.1(b) for the reasons set forth in Resolution No. 759,

1 recommending approval of the proposed designation, which is incorporated herein by  
2 reference.

3 (i) The Planning Department has determined that the actions contemplated in this  
4 Ordinance are in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (California Public  
5 Resources Code section 21000 et seq., "CEQA"). Specifically, the Planning Department has  
6 determined the proposed Planning Code amendment is subject to a Categorical Exemption  
7 from CEQA pursuant to Section 15308 of the Guidelines for Implementation of the statute for  
8 actions by regulatory agencies for protection of the environment (specifically in this case,  
9 landmark designation). Said determination is on file with the Clerk of the Board of  
10 Supervisors in File No. 160293 and is incorporated herein by reference.

11 (j) The Board of Supervisors hereby finds that 35-45 Onondaga Avenue (aka  
12 Alemany Emergency Hospital and Health Center), Lots 016 and 017 in Assessor's Block  
13 6956, has a special character and special historical, architectural, and aesthetic interest and  
14 value, and that its designation as a Landmark will further the purposes of and conform to the  
15 standards set forth in Article 10 of the San Francisco Planning Code.

16 Section 2: Designation. Pursuant to Section 1004 of the Planning Code, 35-45  
17 Onondaga Avenue (aka Alemany Emergency Hospital and Health Center), Lots 016 and 017  
18 in Assessor's Block No. 6956, is hereby designated as a San Francisco Landmark under  
19 Article 10 of the Planning Code.

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25 Section 3. Required Data.

1 (a) The description, location, and boundary of the Landmark site consists of the City  
2 parcel located at 35-45 Onondaga Avenue, Lots 016 and 017 in Assessor's Block No. 6956, in  
3 San Francisco's Excelsior/Outer Mission Street neighborhood.

4 (b) The characteristics of the Landmark that justify its designation are described and  
5 shown in the Landmark Designation Case Report and other supporting materials contained in  
6 Planning Department Case Docket No. 2015-003877DES. In brief, 35-45 Onondaga Avenue  
7 (aka Alemany Emergency Hospital and Health Center), Lots 016 and 017 in Assessor's Block  
8 No. 6956, is eligible for local designation under National Register of Historic Places Criterion  
9 A (as it is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad  
10 patterns of our history) and National Register of Historic Places Criterion C (as it embodies  
11 distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, conveys high artistic  
12 values, and represents the work of a master architect). Specifically, designation of the  
13 Alemany Emergency Hospital and Health Center is proper as the last buildings constructed as  
14 part of San Francisco's emergency hospital system; and designed by master City Architect  
15 Charles H. Sawyer. The buildings embody the distinctive characteristics of Spanish Baroque  
16 and Spanish Colonial Revival style architecture; and the interior contains two significant interior  
17 frescoes, "Birth" and "Community Spirit," painted in 1934 by the noted artist, Bernard  
18 Zakheim.

19 (c) The particular features that shall be preserved, or replaced in-kind as  
20 determined necessary, are those generally shown in photographs and described in the  
21 Landmark Designation Case Report, which can be found in Planning Department Docket No.  
22 No. 2015-003877DES, and which are incorporated in this designation by reference as though  
23 fully set forth. Specifically, the following features shall be preserved or replaced in kind:

24 (1) All exterior elevations, architectural ornament and roofline of 35  
25 Onondaga Avenue, and identified as:

1 (A) Four bay composition consisting of three symmetrical arched bays  
2 toward the west and an arched bay with a lower roofline toward the east.

3 (B) Brick cladding consisting principally of red-colored stretchers  
4 alternating with darker-colored headers.

5 (C) Cream-colored terra cotta cladding and ornament, including bands  
6 of profiled terra cotta outlining the arched bays and entry, terra cotta ornament within the  
7 typanums of the arched window bays featuring scrolls topped by urns and crosses, and terra  
8 cotta beltcourses featuring pairs of colonettes topped by finials

9 (D) Central recessed entry accessed by steps clad in a chevron  
10 pattern and scrolled metal handrails featuring a pair of partially-glazed and paneled wood  
11 doors with an elaborate cream-colored terra cotta surround featuring flanking colonettes and a  
12 floriated frieze with a central cartouche crowned by scrolling ornament, candles, and a plaque  
13 reading "Alemany Emergency Hospital," surmounted by an entablature and a shield with a  
14 cross at center.

15 (E) Metal and glass pendant light fixture hanging from the center of the  
16 entry arch.

17 (F) Arched bay to the west (former ambulance entrance) featuring  
18 terra cotta cladding and a wood frame opening, surrounded by rusticated terra cotta cladding.

19 (G) Roofline featuring two course of dog-tooth brick crowned by a  
20 parapet covered with red clay tiles.

21 (H) Double-hung, wood sash windows with shouldered surrounds.

22 (I) Wire-glass skylights (some screened with non-historic materials on  
23 the interior) and their relationship to the space below.

24 (2) The character-defining interior features of the building at 35 Onondaga  
25 Avenue, which have historically been accessible to the public, include:

1 (A) Entry vestibule featuring tan-colored wall tiles with blue-colored tile  
2 borders, blind arches and a vaulted ceiling.

3 (B) Open volume of former hospital ward at front of building with  
4 cream-colored tile wainscot with tan-colored tile border outlining the wood door and transom  
5 openings.

6 (C) Former operating room and scrub room configuration with blue-  
7 green-colored wall tile and built in cabinets at south end. Contemporary walls and cabinets  
8 dividing the operating room are not character defining.

9 (D) Staircase to basement featuring cream-colored tile with tan-  
10 colored border.

11 (3) All exterior elevations, architectural ornament and roofline of 45  
12 Onondaga Avenue, and identified as:

13 (A) Flat roofed wing and combination hip and gable roof clad with  
14 Spanish Clay tiles.

15 (B) Irregular massing with a one-story wing fronting Onondaga Avenue  
16 connecting to a two-story wing toward the rear.

17 (C) Two-story rounded tower at the intersection of the one- and two-  
18 story wings featuring an arched recessed entry flanked by grid niches and metal and glass  
19 lights, a recessed window opening, and a roofline featuring zig-zag stucco relief, pipe vents  
20 and a conical roof clad with Spanish clay tiles.

21 (D) Courtyard featuring rounded stucco walls, a decorative iron gate  
22 with shield ornament, and a curving seat bench on the interior.

23 (E) Double-hung wood windows with ogee lugs.

24 (F) Pointed arch tripartite window with wood sashes and turned wood  
25 mullions, as well as clay pipe vents beneath the gable end facing Onondaga Avenue.

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(G) Brick chimneys.

(H) Copper rain gutters (portions missing).

(4) The character-defining interior features of the building at 45 Onondaga Avenue, which have historically been accessible to the public, include:

(A) Lobby with double-height volume, gable ceiling with wood beams, and vertical board wainscot with flat board trim throughout.

(B) Central fireplace featuring tile cladding with a floral tile accent, wooden brackets with carved floriated ornament and Fleur-des-lis supporting a wood mantle, and a tapered plaster chimney rising through a wood balcony with a decorative iron railing at the second floor.

(C) Bernard Zakheim frescoes on the fireplace chimney at first floor (partially painted over) and at second floor.

(D) Metal candle sconces flanking the fireplace.

(E) Wood staircase with turned wood balusters and vertical board wainscot. Gabled ceiling at second floor landing of staircase.

(F) Door openings with paneled wood doors and flat board trim flanking the fireplace on the first floor and arched openings flanking the chimney on the second floor.

(G) Metal railing in punched window opening at second story of rounded tower.

Section 4. The property shall be subject to further controls and procedures pursuant to the San Francisco Planning Code and Article 10.

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1 Section 5. Effective Date. This ordinance shall become effective 30 days after  
2 enactment. Enactment occurs when the Mayor signs the ordinance, the Mayor returns the  
3 ordinance unsigned or does not sign the ordinance within ten days of receiving it, or the Board  
4 of Supervisors overrides the Mayor's veto of the ordinance.

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7 APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
8 DENNIS J. HERRERA, City Attorney

9 By:   
10 ANDREA RUIZ ESQUIDE  
11 Deputy City Attorney

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**City and County of San Francisco**  
**Tails**  
**Ordinance**

City Hall  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689

**File Number:** 160293

**Date Passed:** June 07, 2016

Ordinance designating 35-45 Onondaga Avenue (aka Alemany Emergency Hospital and Health Center), Assessor's Parcel Block No. 6956, Lot Nos. 016 and 017, as a Landmark under Planning Code, Article 10; and making environmental findings, findings of public necessity, convenience and welfare, and findings of consistency with the General Plan, and the eight priority policies of Planning Code, Section 101.1.

May 16, 2016 Land Use and Transportation Committee - RECOMMENDED AS COMMITTEE REPORT

May 16, 2016 Land Use and Transportation Committee - RECOMMENDED

May 24, 2016 Board of Supervisors - PASSED, ON FIRST READING

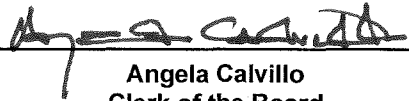
Ayes: 11 - Avalos, Breed, Campos, Cohen, Farrell, Kim, Mar, Peskin, Tang, Wiener and Yee

June 07, 2016 Board of Supervisors - FINALLY PASSED

Ayes: 11 - Avalos, Breed, Campos, Cohen, Farrell, Kim, Mar, Peskin, Tang, Wiener and Yee

File No. 160293

I hereby certify that the foregoing Ordinance was FINALLY PASSED on 6/7/2016 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

  
Angela Calvillo  
Clerk of the Board

  
Mayor

6/17/16  
Date Approved



# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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## Historic Preservation Commission Resolution No. 759 HEARING DATE MARCH 16, 2016

1650 Mission St.  
Suite 400  
San Francisco,  
CA 94103-2479

Reception:  
**415.558.6378**

Fax:  
**415.558.6409**

Planning  
Information:  
**415.558.6377**

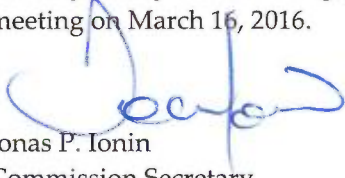
**RESOLUTION TO RECOMMEND TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ARTICLE 10 LANDMARK DESIGNATION OF 35-45 ONONDAGA AVENUE, HISTORICALLY KNOWN AS THE ALEMANY EMERGENCY HOSPITAL AND HEALTH CENTER, LOTS 016 AND 017 IN ASSESSOR'S BLOCK 6956, AS AN ARTICLE 10 LANDMARK.**

1. WHEREAS, a community-sponsored Application for Article 10 Landmark Designation for 35-45 Onondaga Avenue was submitted to the Planning Department by members of the New Mission Terrace Improvement Association; and
2. WHEREAS, on May 20, 2015 the Historic Preservation Commission added 35-45 Onondaga Avenue to the Landmark Designation Work Program; and
3. WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission, at its regular meeting of February 17, 2016, reviewed Department staff's analysis of 35-45 Onondaga Avenue's historical significance per Article 10 as part of the Landmark Designation Case Report dated February 17, 2016 and initiated Landmark designation process through Resolution 758; and
4. WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission finds that the 35-45 Onondaga Avenue nomination is in the form prescribed by the HPC and contains supporting historic, architectural, and/or cultural documentation; and
5. WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission finds that 35-45 Onondaga Avenue, built in 1933, is significant as the last buildings constructed as part of San Francisco's emergency hospital system; and as the work of master City Architect Charles H. Sawyer, and embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Spanish Baroque and Spanish Colonial Revival architectural styles; and, contains two significant interior frescoes by noted artist, Bernard Zakheim, "Birth" and "Community Spirit," painted in 1934; and
6. WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission finds that 35-45 Onondaga Avenue meets the eligibility requirements per Section 1004 of the Planning Code and warrants consideration for Article 10 landmark designation; and
7. WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission finds that the boundaries and the list of character-defining features, as identified in the Department's Case Report dated February 17, 2016, should be considered for preservation under the proposed landmark designation as they relate to the building's historical significance and retain historical integrity.

8. WHEREAS, the proposed designation is consistent with the General Plan priority policies pursuant to Planning Code section 101.1 and furthers Priority Policy No. 7, which states that historic buildings be preserved, for reasons set forth in the February 17, 2016 Case Report; and
9. WHEREAS, the Department has determined that landmark designation is exempt from environmental review, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15308 (Class Eight - Categorical); and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Historic Preservation Commission hereby recommends to the Board of Supervisors approval of landmark designation of 35-45 Onondaga Avenue, Assessor's Block 6956, Lots 016 and 017 pursuant to Article 10 of the Planning Code.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Historic Preservation Commission at its meeting on March 16, 2016.



Jonas P. Ionin  
Commission Secretary

AYES: Hasz, Hyland, Johns, Matsuda, Pearlman, Wolfram

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Johnck

ADOPTED: March 16, 2016



# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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## Historic Preservation Commission Resolution No. 758 HEARING DATE FEBRUARY 17, 2016

1650 Mission St.  
Suite 400  
San Francisco,  
CA 94103-2479

Reception:  
**415.558.6378**

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**415.558.6409**

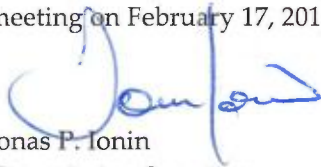
Planning  
Information:  
**415.558.6377**

**RESOLUTION TO INITIATE 35-45 ONONDAGA AVENUE, HISTORICALLY KNOWN AS THE ALEMANY EMERGENCY HOSPITAL AND HEALTH CENTER, LOTS 016 AND 017 IN ASSESSOR'S BLOCK 6956, AS AN ARTICLE 10 LANDMARK.**

1. WHEREAS, a community-sponsored Application for Article 10 Landmark Designation for 35-45 Onondaga Avenue was submitted to the Planning Department by members of the New Mission Terrace Improvement Association; and
2. WHEREAS, on May 20, 2015 the Historic Preservation Commission added 35-45 Onondaga Avenue to the Landmark Designation Work Program; and
3. WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission finds that 35-45 Onondaga Avenue, built in 1933, is significant as the last buildings constructed as part of San Francisco's emergency hospital system; and
4. WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission finds that 35-45 Onondaga Avenue, is significant as the work of master City Architect Charles H. Sawyer, and embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Spanish Baroque and Spanish Colonial Revival architectural styles; and
5. WHEREAS, 45 Onondaga Avenue, the former Alemany Health Center, also contains two significant interior frescoes by noted artist, Bernard Zakheim, "Birth" and "Community Spirit," painted in 1934;; and
6. WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission finds that 35-45 Onondaga Avenue meets the eligibility requirements per Section 1004 of the Planning Code and warrants consideration for Article 10 landmark designation; and
7. WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission finds that the boundaries and the list of character-defining features, as identified in the Department's Case Report, should be considered for preservation under the proposed landmark designation as they relate to the building's historical significance and retain historical integrity.

RESOLVED, that the Historic Preservation Commission hereby initiates 35-45 Onondaga Avenue, Assessor's Block 6596, Lots 016 and 017, as Article 10 Landmarks pursuant to Article 10 of the Planning Code.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Historic Preservation Commission at its meeting on February 17, 2016.



Jonas P. Ionin  
Commission Secretary

AYES: Hasz. Hyland, Johnck, Johns, Matsuda, Pearlman, Wolfram

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ADOPTED: February 17, 2016



# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

## Landmark No. 272 Community-Sponsored Article 10 Landmark Designation

INITIATED BY THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION: FEBRUARY 17, 2016  
APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS: JUNE 7, 2016  
SIGNED BY MAYOR EDWIN M. LEE: JUNE 17, 2016

1650 Mission St.  
Suite 400  
San Francisco,  
CA 94103-2479

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*Staff Contact:* Shannon Ferguson – (415) 575-9074  
[shannon.ferguson@sfgov.org](mailto:shannon.ferguson@sfgov.org)  
*Reviewed By:* Timothy Frye – (415) 575-6822  
[tim.frye@sfgov.org](mailto:tim.frye@sfgov.org)



<i>Historic Name:</i>	Alemaný Emergency Hospital and Health Center
<i>Address:</i>	35-45 Onondaga Avenue
<i>Block/Lot:</i>	6959/016, 017
<i>Zoning:</i>	P – Public / NCD – Excelsior Outer Mission Street Neighborhood Commercial District
<i>Year Built:</i>	1933
<i>Architect:</i>	Charles H. Sawyer
<i>Applicant:</i>	New Mission Terrace Improvement Association / Lisa Dunseth
<i>Prior Historic Studies:</i>	
<i>Prior HPC Actions:</i>	On May 20, 2015 the Historic Preservation Commission voted to add 35-45 Onondaga Avenue to the Landmark Designation Work Program.

<i>Significance Criteria</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Events</u>: Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.</li> <li>▪ <u>Architecture</u>: Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type,</li> </ul>
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	<p>period, or method of construction, and possesses high artistic values.</p>
<p><i>Statement of Significance:</i></p>	<p>The following excerpts are from the Landmark Designation Application:</p> <p>Funded by a 1928 public bond measure and built in 1933, they [these buildings] extended the City’s emergency hospital system to cover a growing and underserved part of town which today remains predominately populated with modest, single-family homes in a district with few architecturally significant buildings. These buildings were the final piece of the citywide emergency hospital system to be built. It was a system which was once nationally known and respected. The buildings are remnants of a noble, and once controversial, effort to provide free and efficient emergency health care to the district.</p> <p>The buildings were planned and designed by City Architect Charles H. Sawyer who began his career with the city during the hectic rebuilding of San Francisco after the 1906 earthquake and fire. He also ushered the Bureau of Architecture through the Great Depression. He oversaw the department during a period when innumerable civic buildings were built: schools and hospitals were his domain. San Francisco’s schools and emergency hospital buildings were once the envy of other cities and earned the respect of professionals across the country. As an administrator, Sawyer was responsible for overseeing the work of the entire department, hiring architects as appropriate. However, there are several buildings for which he himself prepared the plans: the Alemany buildings are two of those and they are significant examples of his work.</p> <p>The Alemany Hospital was opened and dedicated on 16 August 1933. During the same period of time, across town, painter Bernard Zakheim was organizing artists to win the first federal Public Works of Art Project (PWAP) grants to create the Coit Tower frescos. PWAP was a predecessor of the WPA programs: Works Progress Administration/Work Projects Administration. Zakheim painted the Library fresco at Coit Tower, and later in 1934, he painted the two frescos at the Alemany Health Center building: Community Spirit and Growth. These frescos were funded by PWAP, under the sponsorship of the State Emergency Relief Administration (SERA). The Alemany frescos, which depict the neighborhood and a healthcare theme, are important examples of Zakheim’s work and contribute to the overall aesthetic significance of the buildings.</p>

	<p>In the summer of 1978, the threatened closure of the [Emergency Healthcare System] system galvanized the neighbors to organize a protest against the loss of this free emergency healthcare service to the working class residents of the Excelsior and Outer Mission.... During the previous era of citywide elections, neighborhood organizations collaborated to make sure their voices were heard at City Hall. The COMO (Communities of the Outer Mission Organization) was one of those groups. It was instrumental in organizing the “sit-in” at the Alemany Hospital. Neighbors moved into the building, eating and sleeping there for over a month and a half in the summer of 1978. They attempted to continue offering free first aid and emergency services to patients. They waxed the floors, did the laundry, and referred to their effort as “the greatest grassroots movement in San Francisco.”</p> <p>This event, while modest in scale, and largely forgotten, is in keeping with San Francisco’s heralded tradition of civic engagement. These buildings represent the most important moment of social activism in the Excelsior District’s history which occurred just months before the fatal and fateful shootings at City Hall. The buildings, the frescos, the hospital system, and this particular act of social engagement should be acknowledged and remembered.</p>
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<p><i>Character-Defining Features</i></p>	<p>List of Character-Defining Features:</p> <p><b><u>35 Onondaga / Alemany Emergency Hospital: Exterior Features</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All exterior elevations, architectural ornament and roofline</li> <li>▪ Four bay composition consisting of three symmetrical arched bays toward the west and an arched bay with a lower roofline toward the east.</li> <li>▪ Brick cladding consisting principally of red-colored stretchers alternating with darker-colored headers.</li> <li>▪ Cream-colored terra cotta cladding and ornament, including bands of profiled terra cotta outlining the arched bays and entry, terra cotta ornament within the typanums of the arched window bays featuring scrolls topped by urns and crosses, and terra cotta beltcourses featuring pairs of colonettes topped by finials</li> <li>▪ Central recessed entry accessed by steps clad in a chevron pattern and scrolled metal handrails featuring a pair of partially-glazed</li> </ul>
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and paneled wood doors with an elaborate cream-colored terra cotta surround featuring flanking colonettes and a floriated frieze with a central cartouche crowned by scrolling ornament, candles, and a plaque reading "Alemany Emergency Hospital," surmounted by an entablature and a shield with a cross at center.

- Metal and glass pendant light fixture hanging from the center of the entry arch.
- Arched bay to the west (former ambulance entrance) featuring terra cotta cladding and a wood frame opening, surrounded by rusticated terra cotta cladding.
- Roofline featuring two course of dog-tooth brick crowned by a parapet covered with red clay tiles.
- Double-hung, wood sash windows with shouldered surrounds.
- Wire-glass skylights (some screened with non-historic materials on the interior) and their relationship to the space below.

**35 Onondaga Avenue: Interior Character-Defining Features (see significant spaces map)**

- Entry vestibule featuring tan-colored wall tiles with blue-colored tile borders, blind arches and a vaulted ceiling.
- Open volume of former hospital ward at front of building with cream-colored tile wainscot with tan-colored tile border outlining the wood door and transom openings.
- Former operating room and scrub room configuration with blue-green-colored wall tile and built in cabinets at south end. Contemporary walls and cabinets dividing the operating room are not character defining.
- Staircase to basement featuring cream-colored tile with tan-colored border.

**45 Onondaga / Alemany Health Center: Exterior Features**

- All exterior elevations, architectural ornament and roofline.
- Flat roofed wing and combination hip and gable roof clad with Spanish Clay tiles.
- Irregular massing with a one-story wing fronting Onondaga

Avenue connecting to a two-story wing toward the rear.

- Two-story rounded tower at the intersection of the one- and two-story wings featuring an arched recessed entry flanked by grid niches and metal and glass lights, a recessed window opening, and a roofline featuring zig-zag stucco relief, pipe vents and a conical roof clad with Spanish clay tiles.
- Courtyard featuring rounded stucco walls, a decorative iron gate with shield ornament, and a curving seat bench on the interior.
- Double-hung wood windows with ogee lugs.
- Pointed arch tripartite window with wood sashes and turned wood mullions, as well as clay pipe vents beneath the gable end facing Onondaga Avenue.
- Brick chimneys.
- Copper rain gutters (portions missing).

**45 Onondaga Avenue: Interior Character-Defining Features (see significant spaces map)**

- Lobby with double-height volume, gable ceiling with wood beams, and vertical board wainscot with flat board trim throughout.
- Central fireplace featuring tile cladding with a floral tile accent, wooden brackets with carved floriated ornament and Fleur-des-lis supporting a wood mantle, and a tapered plaster chimney rising through a wood balcony with a decorative iron railing at the second floor.
- Bernard Zakheim frescoes on the fireplace chimney at first floor (partially painted over) and at second floor.
- Metal candle sconces flanking the fireplace.
- Wood staircase with turned wood balusters and vertical board wainscot.
- Gabled ceiling at second floor landing of staircase.
- Door openings with paneled wood doors and flat board trim flanking the fireplace on the first floor and arched openings flanking the chimney on the second floor.
- Metal railing in punched window opening at second story of

	rounded tower.
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Additional Photos (35 Onondaga – Alemany Emergency Hospital)









Entry vestibule; note tan-colored wall tiles with blue-colored tile borders, blind arches and a vaulted ceiling.



Detail of tile work in entry vestibule



Former ward room, view northwest; note cream-colored tile with tan-colored tile borders.



Former ward room, view southeast; note cream-colored tile with tan-colored tile borders.





Detail of scrub room interior. Note blue-green-colored wall tile.



South ward room, view southeast.



Entry to scrub room, note built in cabinets (left), former ambulance entrance to operating room, note blue-green-colored wall tile (right).



View toward Onondaga Avenue.



Former ambulance bay and corridor, view southwest



Detail of corridor, view southwest (left), typical bathroom finishes (right)



Detail of stair; note cream-colored tile with tan-colored border.



Typical skylight



Basement boiler room showing apparent connection to 45 Onondaga Avenue

Significant Spaces Map (35 Onondaga – Alemany Emergency Hospital)



First floor plan; location of character defining features represented by green shading.

Additional Photos (45 Onondaga – Alemany Health Center)





Lobby, view south; note double height volume, gable ceiling with wood beams, balcony, central fireplace with tapered chimney, metal candle scones and openings flanking fireplace and chimney, and vertical board wainscot with flat board trim throughout





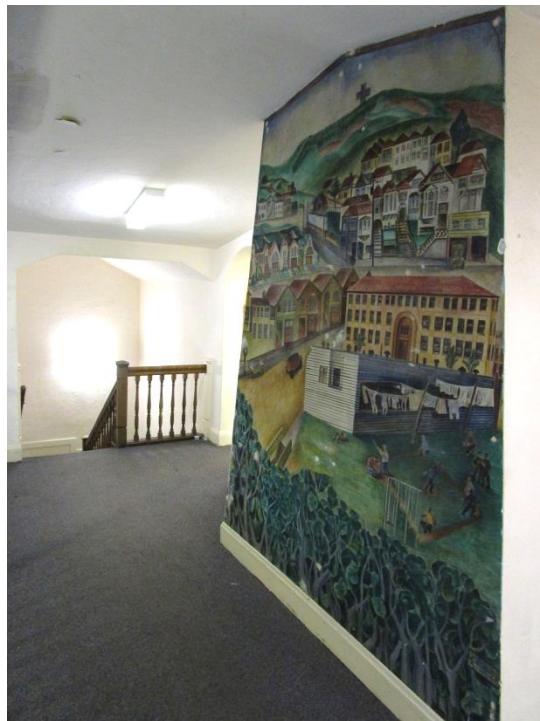
Lobby, view north; note metal railing in punched window opening at second story.



Detail of staircase and fireplace; on fireplace note tile cladding, wood brackets supporting mantle and over-painted fresco above.



View of stair landing at second floor; note turned wood balusters, vertical board wainscot at staircase, and vaulted ceiling.



Fresco facing second floor balcony.



Detail of fresco at second floor (left); detail of balcony railing (right).



Details from fresco at second floor.

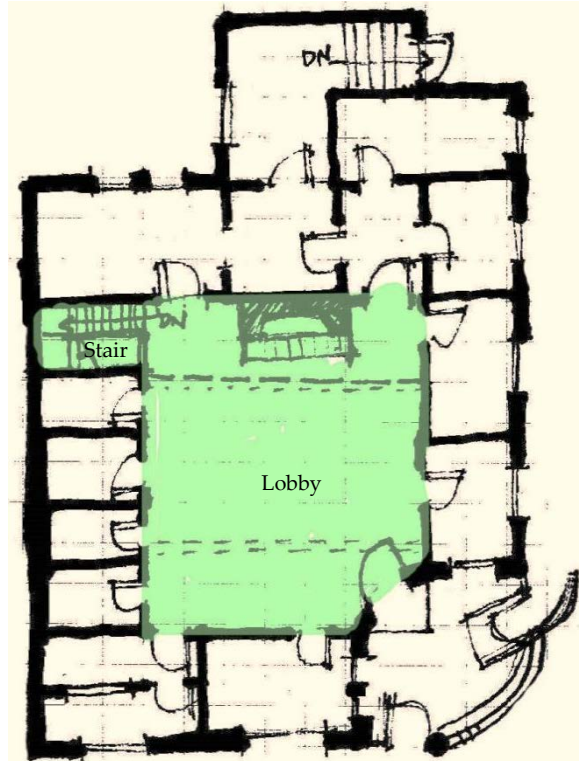


Typical examination room finishes.

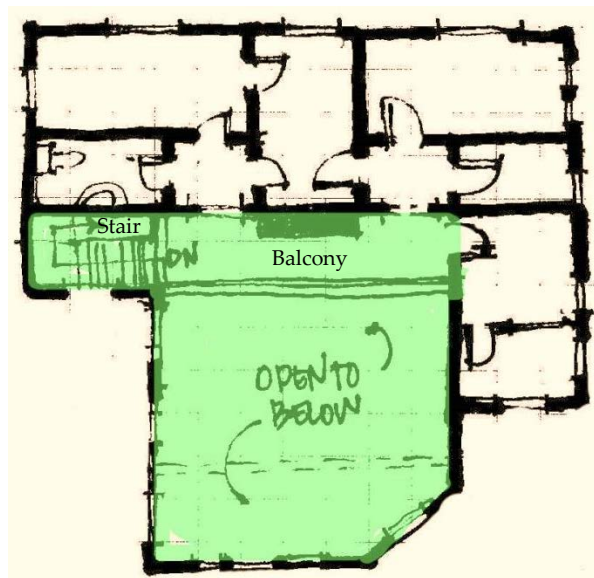


Basement mechanical rooms.

Significant Spaces Map (45 Onondaga – Alemany Health Center)



First floor plan; location of character defining features represented by green shading.



Second floor plan; location of character defining features represented by green shading.



SAN FRANCISCO  
PLANNING  
DEPARTMENT

Planning Department  
1650 Mission Street  
Suite 400  
San Francisco, CA  
94103-9425

T: 415.558.6378  
F: 415.558.6409

## APPLICATION FOR

# Historic Landmark Designation

Landmark designation is authorized by Section 1004 of the San Francisco Planning Code. The designation process includes a review of the Landmark Designation Application by the Planning Department and the Historic Preservation Commission. Final approval is made by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors.

## PRESERVING SAN FRANCISCO HISTORY

Since 1967, San Francisco's Historic Preservation Program has helped preserve important facets of the city's history. The list of designated city landmarks and landmark districts includes iconic architectural masterpieces, monuments to historic events, and places associated with cultural and social movements that have defined our city. However, there are still many more untold stories to celebrate through landmark designation.

## PROPERTIES ELIGIBLE FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION

Most San Francisco landmarks are buildings. But a landmark can also be a structure, site, feature or area of special historical, architectural or aesthetic interest. Collections of properties can also be designated as landmark districts.

Landmarks can be significant for a variety of reasons. The criteria are based on those used by the National Register of Historic Places. They include:

- Properties significant for their association with historic events, including the city's social and cultural history
- Properties significant for their association with a person or group important to the history of the city, state or country
- Properties significant for their architecture or design
- Properties that are valued as visual landmarks, or that have special character or meaning to the city and its residents
- Collections of properties or features that are linked by history, plan, aesthetics or physical development.

## INCENTIVES FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION

Landmark designation recognizes the property as a significant element of San Francisco history. There are also various incentives, including the following:

- Eligibility for the Mills Act program, which can result in property tax reduction
- Eligibility to use the California Historical Building Code
- Eligibility for land use incentives under the San Francisco Planning Code
- Eligibility to display a plaque regarding the building's landmark status

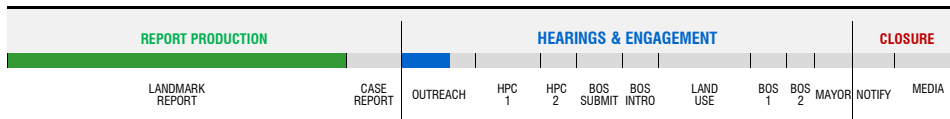
**HOW TO APPLY TO DESIGNATE A LANDMARK**

Any member of the public may nominate a property for landmark designation. The application must contain supporting historic, architectural and/or cultural documentation. More information about the Planning Department’s Historic Preservation program can also be found here: <http://www.sf-planning.org/index.aspx?page=1825>

**THE LANDMARK DESIGNATION PROCESS**

The landmark designation process is a multi-step process. This includes the following:

1. Set a preliminary application review meeting with Planning Department Preservation staff. The meeting will focus on reviewing the draft designation application. Preservation staff can provide advice for improving the application, including any additional research which may be needed.
2. Submit the completed final application for review. Once it is determined to be complete, Preservation staff will place the application on the agenda for a Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) hearing.
3. During the hearing, the HPC will hear public testimony and determine if the property meets the criteria for landmark designation. If so, the Commission will vote to initiate landmark designation and schedule a follow-up hearing.
4. If the landmark designation is for a district, the Planning Commission will provide its review and comment on the proposed designation prior to the HPC making a final recommendation to the Board of Supervisors.
5. At the second hearing, the HPC will hear public testimony and vote on whether to recommend landmark designation to the Board of Supervisors.
6. An HPC recommendation supporting landmark designation will be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors and will be heard by its Land Use and Economic Development Committee. This is a public hearing where the owner(s) and members of the public can offer testimony.
7. The Land Use and Economic Development Committee will forward its recommendation on the designation to the full Board of Supervisors for a first reading. The Board of Supervisors will vote on the designation. A majority of Supervisors must vote in favor of the landmark designation for it to be approved. This is a public hearing, although no public testimony will be heard.
8. At a following Board of Supervisors hearing the proposed designation will have a second reading. This is a public hearing, although no public testimony will be heard. If the majority of Supervisors remain in favor of the landmark designation, the designating ordinance is sent to the Mayor for final signature.



**COMPLETING THE APPLICATION**

Please fill out all of the sections of the application. Use the checklist at the end of this application to ensure that all required materials are included. If more space is needed, please feel free to attach additional sheets as necessary. If you are unsure how to answer any of the questions, please contact Planning Department preservation staff.

**Please submit the completed application to:**  
 San Francisco Planning Department  
 Attn: Landmark Designation Application  
 1650 Mission Street, Suite 400  
 San Francisco, CA 94103-9425

### Historic Landmark Designation Application

#### 1. Current Owner / Applicant Information

Date:

PROPERTY OWNERS NAME: City & County of San Francisco-Real Estate Dept.	
PROPERTY OWNERS ADDRESS: Transferred from DPH to RED in April 2010 Real Estate Division General Services Agency 25 Van Ness Avenue, Suite 400	TELEPHONE: (415) 554-9850 E-MAIL: RealEstateAdmin@sfgov.org

APPLICANT'S NAME: David Hooper, President, NMTIA		<input type="checkbox"/> PREPARED BY
APPLICANT'S ADDRESS: New Mission Terrace Improvement Association P.O. Box 12111, San Francisco, California 94112	TELEPHONE: 415-585-0472	E-MAIL: nmtia.sf@gmail.com; dunsethl@hotmail.com

CONTACT FOR PROJECT INFORMATION:		<input type="checkbox"/> PREPARED BY
ADDRESS:	TELEPHONE:	E-MAIL:

#### 2. Location of the Proposed Landmark

STREET ADDRESS OF PROJECT: 35 and 45 Onondaga Avenue	ZIP CODE: 94112
CROSS STREETS: Alemany Blvd.	

ASSESSORS BLOCK/LOT	LOT DIMENSIONS	LOT AREA (SQ. FT.)	TOWNSHIP DISTRICT:	PLANNING DISTRICT
6959/017 & 016		7,110 total	P (or NC-3 for 45?)	40-x

OTHER ADDRESS (HISTORIC ADDRESS, if applicable)	ZIP CODE:
Alemany Emergency Hospital (35) & Alemany Health Center (45)	

#### 3. Property Information

HISTORIC NAME OF PROPERTY (IF APPLICABLE) see #2 above	DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1932-33	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ACTUAL YEAR <input type="checkbox"/> ESTIMATED YEAR	SOURCE FOR DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: BFHC/SFPL newsclips
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ARCHITECT OR BUILDER: City Architect, Charles H. Sawyer	ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: Spanish Baroque (35) & Spanish Colonial (45)		
SOURCE OF INFORMATION FOR ARCHITECT OR BUILDER: Architect & Engineer, Jan. 1930, p. 111	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>HISTORIC USE: hospital/health center</td> <td>PRESSENT USE: vacant</td> </tr> </table>	HISTORIC USE: hospital/health center	PRESSENT USE: vacant
HISTORIC USE: hospital/health center	PRESSENT USE: vacant		

PROPERTY INCLUDED IN A PRIOR HISTORIC SURVEY? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	SURVEY NAME: 45 in 1976 SF Survey (SFPIM)	SURVEY NUMBER: ?
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#### 4. Statement of Significance

The proposed landmark is significant for the following reason(s). Please check all that apply:

- It is associated with significant events or patterns, or reflects important aspects of social or cultural history
- It is associated with a person or persons important to our history
- It is significant for its architecture or design, or is a notable work of a master builder, designer or architect
- It is valued as a visual landmark, or has special character or meaning to the city and its residents
- It contains archaeological deposits that have the potential to yield important information about history or prehistory

Please summarize why the property or district should be designated a San Francisco Landmark. Whenever possible, include footnotes or a list of references that support the statement of significance. Copies of historic photographs, articles or other sources that directly relate to the property should also be attached.  
please see attached document

#### 5. Property / Architecture Description

Please provide a detailed description of the exterior of the building and any associated buildings on the property. This includes the building's shape, number of stories, architectural style and material. For example, is the building clad with wood, brick or stucco? What materials are the windows and exterior doors made of? Please be sure to include descriptions of the non-publicly visible portions of the building. Attach photographs of the property, including the rear facade.  
please see attached document

#### 6. Neighborhood or District Description

Please provide a narrative describing the buildings both adjacent to, and across the street from, the subject property. This includes describing their architectural styles, number of stories, exterior materials (e.g., wood or stucco cladding) and landscape features, if any. Attach representative photographs.

If the application is for a landmark district, please provide similar information describing the architectural character of the district. Also be sure to include a map outlining the boundaries of the district, as well as a list of all properties including their addresses, block and lot numbers, and dates of construction. This information may be gathered using the San Francisco Property Information Map, available here: [http://www.sfdph.org/dph/eha/ceqa/docs/20140314\\_SFPIM.pdf](http://www.sfdph.org/dph/eha/ceqa/docs/20140314_SFPIM.pdf)  
please see attached document

### 7. Building Permits and History of Alterations

Please list all building permits from the date of construction to present. Be sure to include any alterations or additions to the building. These include changes such as window replacement, construction of a new garage, or installation of roof devices. Also attach photocopies of building permits. Copies of building permits are available from the Department of Building Inspection, 1660 Mission Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor (<http://www.sfdph.org/dph/cepd/permits.asp>)

*Note: Do not complete this section if the application is for a landmark district.*

PERMIT:	DATE:	DESCRIPTION OF WORK:
1.	#45: 2/21/2002	folding gates
2.	#45: 9/30/2002	window guards
3.	#45: 2/6/1996	fire escape, fire wall, lattice over balcony
4.	#45: 12/27/1995	fire escape
5.	#45: 6/10/1994	ADA ramp and sidewalk
6.	#45: 3/15/1994	ADA ramp
7.	#45: 2/28/1994	ADA ramp
8.	#45: 9/23/1993	fire escape

Please describe any additional alterations that are not included in this table. For example, have any obvious changes been made to the property for which no building permit record is available?

#35: 3/8/2006: re-roofing; #35: 10/22/1982: interior alterations, relocation of nonload bearing partition, new doors, light fixtures, plumbing & roof repair, paint; #35: 10/22/1982: ADA bathroom, shower, repair heating

### 8. Ownership History Table

Please list all owners of the property from the date of construction to present. Building ownership may be researched at the San Francisco Assessor-Recorder's Office, located at City Hall, Room 190

*Note: Do not complete this section if the application is for a landmark district.*

OWNER:	DATES (FROM - TO):	NAME(S):	OCCUPATION:
1.	1932 -2010	C&C of SF: Dept. of Public Health	
2.	2010-present	C&C of SF: Real Estate Division	
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			

If the property is significant for its association with a person important to history, please be sure to expand on this information in Section 9.

**9. Occupant History Table**

Please list occupants (if different from the owners) from the date of construction to present. It is not necessary to list the occupants for each year. A sample of every five to seven years (e.g. 1900, 1917, 1923, etc.) is sufficient. For multi-unit buildings, please use a representative sampling of occupants. A chronological list of San Francisco city directories from 1850 - 1982 is available online. Choosing the "DA" link will take you to a scan of the original document:

<http://www.sfdirectories.com/info/default.cfm>

Beginning with the year 1950, a "reverse directory" is available at the back of each volume, allowing you to look up a specific address to see the occupants.

\*Note: Do not complete this section if the application is for a landmark district.

1.	Aug. 1933	C&C of SF: Dept. of Public Health	
2.	1943	bdg services closed due to WWII	
3.	1956	campaign to keep AEH open	
4.	1978	sit-in to keep AEH open	
5.	1980	ambulance service from AEH site	
6.	1982	lease: St. Luke's Hospital	
7.	1992-2011	lease: St. Mary's Hos. & Keystone Voc. Tr. Sch.	
8.	2011-2015	vacant	

If the property is significant for having been used by an occupant, group or tenant important to history, please expand on this information below.

**10. Public Information Release**

Please read the following statements and check each to indicate that you agree with the statement. Then sign below in the space provided.

- I understand that submitted documents will become public records under the California Public Records Act, and that these documents will be made available upon request to members of the public for inspection and copying.
- I acknowledge that all photographs and images submitted as part of the application may be used by the City without compensation.

David Hooper

Name (Print):

May 6, 2015

Date:

David Patrick Hooper

Signature:

LISA DUNSETH, 5 October 2015

Lisa Dunseth

## Submittal Checklist

Use the checklist below to ensure that all required materials are included with your application.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Photographs of subject property, including the front, rear and visible side facades
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Description of the subject property (Section 5)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Neighborhood description (Section 6) with photos of adjacent properties and properties across the street
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Building permit history (Section 7), with copies of all permits
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ownership history (Section 8)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Occupant history (Section 9)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Historic photographs, if available
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Original building drawings, if available
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other documentation related to the history of the property, such as newspaper articles or other references

Statement of Significance: The Architect, the Architecture, the Murals

The Alemany Emergency Hospital and Health Center buildings anchor the corner of Alemany Boulevard and Onondaga Avenue, just one short block from Mission Street, in the heart of the Excelsior District. They are valued by residents as unofficial neighborhood landmarks and have special meaning to those who remember when they were operational.

Funded by a 1928 public bond measure and built in 1933, they extended the City's emergency hospital system to cover a growing and underserved part of town which today remains predominately populated with modest, single-family homes in a district with few architecturally significant buildings. These buildings were the final piece of the citywide emergency hospital system to be built. It was a system which was once nationally known and respected. The buildings are remnants of a noble, and once controversial, effort to provide free and efficient emergency health care to the district. These important and interesting buildings are the subject of this landmarking application.

The buildings were planned and designed by City Architect Charles H. Sawyer who began his career with the city during the hectic rebuilding of San Francisco after the 1906 earthquake and fire. He also ushered the Bureau of Architecture through the Great Depression. He oversaw the department during a period when innumerable civic buildings were built: schools and hospitals were his domain. San Francisco's schools and emergency hospital buildings were once the envy of other cities and earned the respect of professionals across the country. As an administrator, Sawyer was responsible for overseeing the work of the entire department, hiring architects as appropriate. However, there are several buildings for which he himself prepared the plans: the Alemany buildings are two of those and they are significant examples of his work.

Built during a time when the City's population was continuing to grow, the Alemany Emergency Hospital and Health Center buildings were funded by voter-approved bond monies. There was overwhelming public support for them, during a period when people faced hard economic times and the City faced a "depression load of indigent sick."<sup>1</sup> This was during the Great Depression when state and federal monies were being made available to keep people, including artists and writers, employed.

The Alemany Hospital was opened and dedicated on 16 August 1933. During the same period of time, across town, painter Bernard Zakheim was organizing artists to win the first federal Public Works of Art Project (PWAP) grants to create the Coit Tower murals. PWAP was a predecessor of the WPA programs: Works Progress Administration/Work Projects Administration. Zakheim painted the *Library* mural at Coit Tower, and later in 1934, he painted the two murals at the Alemany Health Center building: *Community Spirit* and *Growth*. These murals were funded by PWAP, under the sponsorship of the State Emergency Relief Administration (SERA). The Alemany murals, which depict the neighborhood and a healthcare theme, are important examples of Zakheim's work and contribute to the overall aesthetic significance of the buildings.

#### Statement of Significance: The Emergency Hospital System

*The five hospitals (in the citywide system) have different problems depending on the zone each is in. Harbor has many serious cases--stevedores who have been injured on the job or waterfront prowlers who have been brawling. Park, especially over the weekends, handles dog bites, tick bites and children who have fallen from swings. Alemany largely handles domestic accidents, but the crew out there will tell you that when they get an auto accident "it's a lulu." That's because the number of boulevards--Bayshore Highway, Alemany Boulevard, Sloat Boulevard and Nineteenth Avenue--allow drivers to get up considerable speed before they smack into each other.<sup>2</sup>*

San Francisco's Emergency Hospital System is fondly remembered by those old enough to have used it and a surprising historical note to younger people and to those who did not grow up here. Alemany Emergency specifically is remembered by many longtime residents of this stable, working class community which still includes many families who have lived in the neighborhood for three and four generations.

The citywide system was created to address the needs of a quickly growing population and became a professionally respected organization.<sup>3</sup> It was known as "one of the most comprehensive and elaborate public health services of its kind in the United States."<sup>4</sup> Its origins can be traced to the treatment rooms attached to the city's prison circa 1870s<sup>5</sup> and it evolved into the well-developed system of emergency care "recognized as one of the finest in the United States."

The history of San Francisco's free emergency healthcare system features colorful characters and dedicated civil servants, such as City Architect Charles H. Sawyer and Director of Public Health Dr. Jacob Geiger. They worked together with elected officials and strategized the political system of the time to accomplish their work. The development and growth of the hospital system, which began in the 19th century with Central, Park, and Harbor hospitals, expanded to include Mission, Potrero, Ocean Beach and finally Alemany.

The system was gradually folded into what eventually became the first complete municipal trauma center at General Hospital.<sup>6</sup> Its financial and political support fluctuated during times of extreme population growth, the Great Depression, the World Wars, the passage of local bond measures, the availability of state and federal funds, and the passage of Proposition 13 in the 1970s. Social changes in health care reform and Medicare/Medicaid laws and the expansion of emergency rooms in private hospitals played a role in the development and changes to the system. Technological improvements in communications systems, like the 911 call system, had broad and sweeping effects. The evolution of the system's origins is complex and the reasons for the eventual demise of this free health care system are equally complicated. The system was officially disbanded in the summer of 1978 despite organized civic engagement and protest. What remains is the story and several of the original buildings -- one of which, the Park Emergency Hospital, has already been landmarked.

#### Statement of Significance: The Community's Social Engagement

Sawyer and Geiger's dedication to civic buildings and public health were embodied in these two buildings. In the summer of 1978, the threatened closure of the system galvanized the neighbors to organize a protest against the loss of this free emergency healthcare service to the working class residents of the Excelsior and Outer Mission.

In 1978, the newly instituted District Elections had named Dan White the City Supervisor for the Excelsior/Outer Mission area. He spoke publicly in favor of keeping the Alemany hospital open.<sup>7</sup> District Elections were designed to make sure the voices of the neighborhoods were heard downtown and this was the first year of that experiment.<sup>8</sup>

During the previous era of citywide elections, neighborhood organizations collaborated to make sure their voice were heard at City Hall. The COMO (Communities of the Outer Mission Organization) was one of those groups. It was instrumental in organizing the “sit-in” at the Alemany Hospital. Neighbors moved into the building, eating and sleeping there for over a month and a half in the summer of 1978. They attempted to continue offering free first aid and emergency services to patients. They waxed the floors, did the laundry, and referred to their effort as “the greatest grassroots movement in San Francisco.”<sup>9</sup>

This event, while modest in scale, and largely forgotten, is in keeping with San Francisco’s heralded tradition of civic engagement. These buildings represent the most important moment of social activism in the Excelsior District’s history which occurred just months before the fatal and fateful shootings at City Hall. The buildings, the murals, the hospital system, and this particular act of social engagement should be acknowledged and remembered.



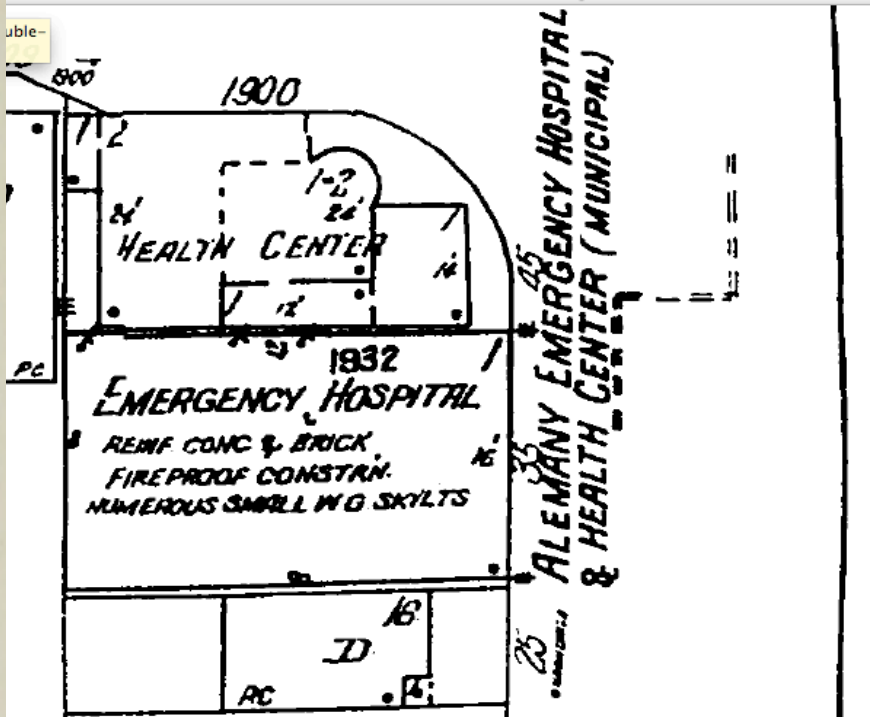
Photo courtesy of Rich Ayres, 2015



Architectural Description: 35 & 45 Onondaga Avenue

35-45 Onondaga Avenue was built as a single project that housed two closely-related city programs. The Emergency Hospital was located at 35 Onondaga, while the Health Center was at 45 Onondaga. Over time these buildings have been referred to as: Health At Home; Alemany Aid Center; and Alemany Treatment Center. In order to highlight the fact that each part of this building was dedicated to a separate program, each received its own, distinct architectural treatment. Although both halves were designed to convey a Mediterranean feeling, the Emergency Hospital had a lavish and colorful composition executed in brick and terra cotta, while the Health Center was a more restrained exercise in stucco. It would be difficult to tell, just by looking, that the entire building was designed and built as a single project.

Sub-Contracts Awarded.  
HOSPITAL Cont. price, \$47,764  
SAN FRANCISCO. Onondaga Avenue  
and Alemany Blvd.  
Two-story Class A reinforced concrete  
Emergency Hospital.  
Owner—City and County of San Fran-  
cisco, S. J. Hester, secretary of  
the Board of Public Works.  
Plans by Bureau of Architecture, De-  
partment of Public Works, Chas.  
H. Sawyer, Chief of Bureau, 2nd  
floor, City Hall.  
Contractor—Albert Nelson, 242 Ocean  
Avenue.  
Ornamental Iron—Anchor Post Fence  
Co., 460 5th St.  
Terra Cotta—N. Clark & Son, 116 Na-  
toma Street.  
Plastering—W. O. Anderson.  
Painting—Patterson Bros., 494 36th St.  
Oakland.  
Glazed Tile—Kraftile Co., 525 Market  
Street.  
Interior Tile—Art Tile & Mantel Co.,  
221 Oak St.  
Reinforcing Steel—Pacific Coast Steel  
Corp., 20th and Illinois Sts.  
Structural Steel—McClintic Marshall  
Co., 2050 Bryant St.  
Mill Work—Pacific Mfg. Co., Monad-  
nock Bldg.  
Lumber—Hobbs Wall & Co., Fife Bldg.  
Terrazzo—California Terrazzo Marble  
Co., 2085 San Bruno Ave.  
Finish Hardware—Baker Hamilton &  
Pacific Co., 700 7th St.



Architect and Engineer, January 1930, p.111, announcing contract. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1950.

The Emergency Hospital, 35 Onondaga Avenue

The Emergency Hospital at 35 Onondaga has a simpler, rectangular plan and a richer ornamental scheme which could be described as Spanish Baroque. Its facade is divided into four bays: the main body of the hospital, which is symmetrical and is composed of three bays, and a slightly lower ambulance bay at left. Structurally, it is reinforced concrete with a brick front.

The main body of the hospital has a brick facade composed principally of red stretchers alternating with blackened headers. At the parapet, two courses of red bricks are turned at forty-five degree angles for a zig-zag effect. All other ornament is cast in cream-colored terra cotta.

In composition, the facade is symmetrical and consists of an elaborate parapet, entablature, and frieze over three bays. The center bay is devoted to an arched entrance, and each outer bay is devoted to an arched window.



Photo courtesy of Lisa Dunseth, 2015

The parapet is topped by a course of clay tiles over the above-mentioned courses of zig-zag bricks. The entablature below is made of profiled terra cotta with cast floral ornament. Below it is a frieze of brick, and below this is a belt course of terra cotta, again with cast floral ornament. Elaborate Baroque columns rise from below the belt course to above the entablature and into the parapet, uniting the different parts of this composition. All of these features survive unaltered, but the condition is only fair; cleaning and perhaps other restoration is needed.

The arched openings below -- the entrance and windows -- are each defined by bands of profiled terra cotta. In the windows, the inside perimeter of each terra cotta band is lined by brick headers. Also in the windows, terra cotta panels decorated with an urn, cross and candles fill the interiors of the arches. The recessed central entrance is decorated by a classical panel reading "Alemany Emergency Hospital" plus a shield and candles, a classical overdoor, and colonnettes, all of terra cotta. The colonnettes flank paired paneled wooden doors with upper-level glazing. The windows are now filled by dense protective wire screens.



Photo courtesy of Lisa Dunseth, 2015

At far left (to the east), is an ambulance bay which is clad almost entirely by cream-colored terra cotta. This terra cotta facade is divided by joints to resemble a masonry arch. The dominant feature of this bay is a vehicle entrance whose segmental-arched head is profiled with many layers. One of the layers has a floral motif; another continues downward along the sides of the opening as spindles. A thinner profiled course with a floral molding stretches across the top of this bay. An ornamental urn at far left and a scroll bracket at far right, both made of terra cotta, top the composition. A thin column of alternating red and black bricks defines the left edge of this bay. The original ambulance doors have been replaced by a glass pedestrian door, transom, and sidelight, all in a modern metal frame surrounded by a profiled wooden casing. This wooden casing is painted red and appears to be original.

Remaining original interior details include teal-green, cream, and terracotta ceramic tile wall cladding, including tile trim outlining doors and windows, transoms above doors, and built-in wooden cabinetry. The space was originally filled with natural light from the approximately eighteen<sup>1</sup> skylights some of which are visible -- others appear to have been covered up.

### Alterations

Alterations to the exterior of 35 Onondaga have been very few. The original paired wooden vehicle doors have been removed from the ambulance bay and were replaced by the present glass and metal pedestrian entrance. The wire screens over the windows are also non-original. The original First Aid sign on a bracket to the left of the front door and visible in old photos is gone.



Photo courtesy of Lisa Dunseth, 2015



Photo courtesy of Jonathan Lammers, 2015



Photo courtesy of Jonathan Lammers, 2015



Photo courtesy of Rich Ayres, 2015

### The Health Center, 45 Onondaga Avenue

The Health Center occupies the corner of the lot, at the intersection of Onondaga Avenue and Alemany Boulevard. Its form is irregular and its style could be described as Spanish Colonial. The main body of the building forms a gabled, two-story, rectangular block that is built to the lot line on Alemany but is set far back from Onondaga Avenue. A one-story wing is built in front of this block, and it extends almost, but not quite, to Onondaga. Where the two-story block and the one-story wing meet, a rounded tower rises to just above the roofline. All of these parts are clad in stucco. The overall effect is that of a medieval Mediterranean hilltown house that was built in stages over time, resulting in an irregular massing.

The angle between the two-story block and the one-story wing creates a small courtyard, which is reached from the sidewalk by a series of three steps. This court is enclosed by a high stucco wall (on the Alemany side) and an ornamental iron fence (at the corner). These features show in early photographs and are original. The building's public face would have provided a welcoming entrance, as if to a private home, which is in direct contrast to the Hospital building's facade.

The roof of the Health Center, like the form, is irregular. The two-story block is hipped where it faces Alemany and gabled where it faces Onondaga. The corner tower has a low-pitched conical roof, and the one-story wing has a flat roof. All parts of this roof are covered with curved Spanish clay tiles except for the one-story wing, where the roof perimeter is lined with such tiles.

With one exception, windows are rectangular, with traditional double-hung wooden sash and stucco-clad sills. These are variously single and paired. Those in the first story have non-original protective steel grilles. The exception is a tripartite window with a triangular head in the recessed second story, facing Onondaga Avenue. This window has wooden sash with turned spindles for mullions.

As mentioned above, the Health Center's ornamental scheme is restrained. The entrance in the corner tower takes the form of a steeply arched void. A zig-zag course can be found impressed in the stucco in the corner tower, just below the roofline. Grids of small recesses flank the arched entrance and are topped by ornamental lanterns. Gutters and downspouts, parts of which are missing, are copper, with profiled surfaces.

Remaining interior original details include: the lobby which includes its double-height volume, gable ceiling with wood beams, and vertical board wainscot with flat board trim; balcony with wrought iron railing; and paneled wood doors throughout.

The centerpiece of the main room is the terracotta fireplace which makes a distinctive home-like statement referenced in the building's later name: the "Health At Home" building. The "battered" chimney features two murals painted in 1934: the mural above the fireplace on the main floor is mostly painted over; the mural on the chimney at the balcony level is intact but in need of conservation. Sconces flank the fireplace at the first floor. On the balcony there are arched walkway openings on either side of the chimney.

Alterations

Alterations to the exterior at 45 Onondaga include: faux balconies have been removed from four second story windows, protective grilles have been added to the first story windows, and parts of the copper downspouts have been removed. The pepper trees flanking the entrance gate seem to occupy boxes intended as planters, but these trees do not show in an early photograph. They partially obscure the building behind them. The original freestanding First Aid sign, at the front of the building and visible in old photos, is gone.



Photo courtesy of Lisa Dunseth, 2015





Photo courtesy of Lisa Dunseth, 2015



Photo courtesy of Lisa Dunseth, 2015



Photo courtesy of Lisa Dunseth, 2015



Photo courtesy of Jonathan Lammers, 2015



Photo courtesy of Jonathan Lammers, 2015



Photo courtesy of Jonathan Lammers, 2015



Photo courtesy of Jonathan Lammers, 2015

HISTORY: The San Francisco Emergency Hospital System: 1903-1932

The origins of the emergency hospital system which evolved into a citywide system can be traced to the treatment rooms attached to the city's prison circa 1870.<sup>10</sup> The city's first emergency room was located in the basement of the old City Hall circa 1876<sup>11</sup> -- it was destroyed in the earthquake and fire of 1906.

Beginning in 1889, William Randolph Heart, used his newspaper, the *Examiner*, to campaign against San Francisco's lack of a proper ambulance and emergency service and to expose how San Francisco "lagged far behind the other major East Coast cities."<sup>12</sup> In 1896, Annie Laurie, the well-loved newspaperwoman who wrote for the *Examiner*, dramatized the City's lack of service in a scathing piece. She pretended she was injured, sought help, and then wrote about her abominable treatment. (Incidentally, she was such a beloved public figure that, after her death in 1936, her body was laid in state at City Hall.<sup>13</sup>) These protests brought results.

In 1897, just a year after Annie Laurie's dramatic exposé, two Emergency Hospitals were built. One was the Park Emergency Hospital at Golden Gate Park and Stanyan. (Today, the Park Emergency Hospital building is a City Landmark and fully restored.) The second was Harbor Emergency Hospital at the foot of Clay Street.<sup>14</sup> (In 1926, it moved to 88 Sacramento<sup>15</sup> and later moved to 1490 Mason Street, atop the Broadway Tunnel.<sup>16</sup> The original Harbor building is gone. Today 1490 Mason Street is the location for the Chinese Public Health Center.)

By 1903 when the Potrero Emergency Hospital was opened there was a formally-established citywide Emergency Hospital Service.<sup>17</sup> (Potrero was moved in 1914 to the Potrero Police Station at 2312 3rd Street. It was closed in 1933 just after the Alemany Hospital was opened. The building is extant and derelict.)

Mission Emergency ("attached to but administratively separate from" the General hospital) was established in 1909 near 23rd and Potrero Avenue. (The original Mission building is extant and part of the General Hospital complex.)

Central Emergency was rebuilt as part of the municipal complex at Civic Center in 1917 and served as the headquarters of the City's ambulance service. Later, in 1932 the new Health Administration building at Civic Center was being planned which would not include emergency services. But until the mid 1930s many major surgical procedures were done at Central Emergency.<sup>18</sup>

Additional support services operated later at the Mission Health Center, 3000 24th Street, and at a "dressing station" which opened at Fleishhacker Pool in 1925.<sup>19</sup> (The original Fleishhacker Pool first aid station building had been vacant and derelict for many years when it burned down in 2012.)

By 1916, major, and much needed, improvements to the system had been made. One headline read: "S.F. Emergency Hospitals Lead" ... "Four Great Eastern Cities Adopt" our system. In that article, Charles Bucher, who had by that time, been Chief Steward of the Emergency Hospitals for twenty years, reported on the impressive work done at the Central, Harbor, Mission, Park, and Potrero Emergency Hospitals.<sup>20</sup>

The City's emergency hospital system grew during the long career and under the administrative support of Edmund Butler, who was the Chief of the citywide emergency and ambulance system from 1919 until his death in 1954 -- a period of time which spanned the Great Depression and World War II. Butler's Assistant Chief of Emergency Service was George Rhoads who served from 1920 until his untimely death in 1944. Both men were considered "fine men" and "excellent teachers."<sup>21</sup> They would have provided a stable and supportive environment for the service to thrive.

But in 1920, a headline reads: "S.F. Hospital Forces Oppose First Aid Cut--Full Emergency Service Restoration to Be Asked of Supervisor's Today." The article describes how the staff of the hospitals, facing drastic cuts, went themselves to the Board of Supervisors to protest<sup>22</sup>. Apparently this was effective and the Chief Surgeon Edward Butler's rank and salary was restored.

HISTORY: The Health and Hospital Bond #56: November 6, 1928

In April 1928, Dr. Hassler, from the Board of Public Health was campaigning for the Health and Hospital Bond No. 56. It passed with an overwhelming “Yes” vote of 73% and provided \$3.5 million dollars for construction. (Initially it had been a \$2.8 million bond.) The bond provided for:

*Permanent buildings within and without the City and County of San Francisco to be used as additions to the Tuberculosis Preventorium Health Farm in San Mateo County, and in San Francisco County construct a Psychopathic Building, Cancer Institute, additions to the Laguna Honda Home, additional stories to be added to the present Ward Buildings and Tuberculosis Hospital on the San Francisco Hospital site, enlarge Central Emergency Hospital, including a Health Center Buildings on lands adjacent to the Civic Center and additional lands, allowing for the extension of the San Francisco Hospital and the purchase of existing hospitals or institutions, erection of Health Centers in districts throughout San Francisco, and the purchase of necessary lands, buildings, equipment and furnishings.<sup>23</sup>*

While the language in the bond does not mention Alemany specifically, it refers to the “erection of Health Centers in districts throughout San Francisco.” In the public relations campaign for the bond, this translated into an “emergency hospital unit and health center at Ocean Avenue and Alemany Boulevard.”<sup>24</sup> By August of 1928, the Board of Health was urging passage of this bond and the need for the Alemany Hospital (still at Ocean Avenue)<sup>25</sup> and by October 1928 thirty-five civic clubs were working on the passage of this bond which had increased to \$3.5 million dollars.<sup>26</sup> An appeal by civic leaders, in November 1928, for passage of the bond reminds voters that the bond will also “provide for a cancer institute, will enlarge the tubercular preventorium near Redwood City (eventually the Hassler Health Farm) and will provide an adequate psychopathic hospital.”<sup>27</sup>

The bond passed by a wide margin and in November 1930 the City chose an alternate site at Alemany and Onondaga and purchased it for the “Outer Mission District Health Center.”<sup>28</sup> The January issue of *Architect and Engineer* reported: “1930 promises to be an active one in new building construction for the City and County” and lists several health and school building projects, one of which is the Alemany Hospital.

The “Tuberculosis Preventorium Health Farm,” which was funded by this bond, was later called the Hassler Health Farm -- it operated roughly between 1926-1972, was sold by the City, and, since 1983, has been known as the Pulgas Ridge Preserve Open Space in San Mateo County.<sup>29</sup> The Central Emergency Hospital at Civic Center, including the Health Center Administration Building, is extant. The improvements at Laguna Honda and General Hospital were also major elements of this bond -- we assume these wings are extant and part of those two existing and renovated hospital campuses.

Despite the success of the bond measure, sustainable funding for the emergency hospital system continued to be a problem during the Depression years<sup>30</sup> which, incidentally, was also a time of continued population growth in San Francisco.



Alemany Emergency Hospital & Health Center, Onondaga and Alemany Boulevard, 1962.  
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library. [Note the “Emergency Hospital” sign at entrance.]

### HISTORY: The Alemany Hospital, The Last To Be Built: 1933

Charles H. Sawyer, as City Architect, “prepared the plans” in 1931 for the one of the “eight health centers for the city, with the Civic Center Building as headquarters.” The plan was approved for construction by the Board of Supervisors in October 1931.<sup>31</sup> It is obvious that the plan for eight emergency hospitals was scaled down indicating how the plans for bond monies could be changed over the years.<sup>32</sup> It was planned for the southeast corner of Alemany Boulevard and Onondaga Avenue, would cost \$65,000, and would feature a two-story, brick and tile building with the emergency hospital on the ground floor and the health center upstairs.”<sup>33</sup>

This original Alemany plan was modified. It eventually became a one-story hospital and two-story health center. The cost was later revised showing an increase of over \$17,000 -- perhaps to account for those changes.<sup>34</sup> This increase foreshadows the ongoing funding problems: it’s one thing to build the building, but an entirely different problem to sustain the equipment and staff to run the services.

Nevertheless, the buildings were built to meet the needs of the growing southeastern side of town. It was 20% finished in 1932 and it was reported in the newspapers that “work will not be halted for lack of funds.”<sup>35</sup> The Alemany Hospital was only 50% complete in May 1932. Meanwhile, Dr. Geiger was already asking for more money to run the existing hospitals due to an increase in demand for services.<sup>36</sup>

By January 1933 the City declared it couldn’t keep promises made in the 1928 hospital building plan because of over-spending on the “lavish” Public Health building at Civic Center and the new wards at San Francisco General Hospital.<sup>37</sup> Just as today, there were problems with contractors and the City’s bidding process which probably made it impossible to have an efficient and streamlined building program.<sup>38</sup> Also in January 1933, it was reported that Geiger was able to hire<sup>39</sup> seven new doctors for the emergency hospital system<sup>40</sup> and the local newspapers reported “the City should be proud of its emergency services...often called the best in the country.”<sup>41</sup>



Finally, the Alemany Health Center, but not the Alemany Hospital, began operating in April 1933. The Alemany Hospital had funding issues even before it was fully opened for business.<sup>42</sup> Dr. Geiger planned to open the Alemany Hospital with “Mrs. Frank Eickhoff, new Mission counselor” on May 19th.<sup>43</sup> But the opening was postponed: the Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution protesting the removal of equipment from the Potrero Hospital which was to be used at the new Alemany Hospital. The Alemany Emergency Hospital was not officially opened until August, after funds were procured to fully equip it.<sup>44</sup> On August 16th, this headline appeared in the newspaper: “Alemany Hospital Open Without Blare” with Acting Director of Health, Dr. Jacques Gray officiating, on August 16, 1933.<sup>45</sup> One wonders about Geiger’s absence.

In December 6, 1933, Dr. Geiger is reporting a public health crisis due to a “depression load” of indigent sick; he complains that the Board of Supervisors won’t appropriate more funds. Geiger threatened to close Potrero Emergency hospital, wards at San Francisco Hospital, and possibly, the recently opened Alemany Hospital. On December 8, 1933, “peace reigned over the city hospital situation” after the Board of Supervisors approved emergency appropriations.<sup>46</sup> The new Alemany Hospital stayed open, but the Potrero Hospital was closed: funding issues, shifts in population, and changes in land use along Third Street -- all certainly contributed to its closure.<sup>47</sup>

During the same period of time, across town, painter Bernard Zakheim was organizing artists to win the first federal Public Works of Art Project (PWAP) grants to create the Coit Tower murals. PWAP was a predecessor of the WPA programs: Works Progress Administration/Work Projects Administration. Zakheim painted the *Library* mural at Coit Tower, and later in 1934, he painted the two murals at the Alemany Health Center building: *Community Spirit* and *Growth*. These murals were funded by PWAP, under the sponsorship of the State Emergency Relief Administration (SERA). See more about this in the Zakheim section below.

#### HISTORY: The Reputation and Demand For Services: 1935 - 1954

In 1935, a *Saturday Evening Post* article complains about New Deal experiments like the “voluntary hospitals” ...which...“have been operating in the red for years”<sup>48</sup> pointing to ongoing criticism of publicly funded health care.

By 1937, the emergency hospital system had its busiest year ever with 70,000 admissions.<sup>49</sup> It is not surprising that another major hospital bond was passed that year.<sup>50</sup> In addition, in 1937, the City's Health Service System for employees was instituted.<sup>51</sup>

In October 1938, the City was notified of its second PWA (federal Public Works Administration) grant for improving San Francisco Hospital, Laguna Honda Home for the Aged, and the Hassler Health Home in San Mateo County. The only previous PWA grant had been for schools which Charles H. Sawyer had been administering. Other outstanding applications for federal grants at the time included applications to improve utilities, 19th Avenue, Park Presidio Boulevard, and for street construction in general.<sup>52</sup>

In 1940 there is still controversy about funding the New Deal. The State Relief Administration is critiqued in a piece titled "The Shocking Crime of Communism in State Relief."<sup>53</sup> But also in 1940, San Francisco's emergency hospitals had treated 75,000 patients and San Francisco Hospital admissions were at a 22-year peak.<sup>54</sup> In 1945, the six emergency hospitals had treated 72,758 patients.<sup>55</sup> These numbers parallel the City's increasing population.

Even as critics argued about the New Deal and federal funding for such projects, praise for San Francisco's Emergency Hospital system continued. By 1948, after World War II, a feature article in the *Chronicle* entitled "Earl Blake's Boys" reported that "San Francisco, alone among U.S. cities, has undertaken for the past 70 years the complete emergency care of its citizens."<sup>56</sup> Additionally, the Kaiser Hospital system, originally for company workers, had opened for public enrollment in 1945. Kaiser initiated its innovative Prepayment System which influenced later and broad developments in the American healthcare system.<sup>57</sup>

In 1953, another *Saturday Evening Post* article features S.F.'s Emergency Hospitals, "often called the world's finest...more than that, they're free." When asked about charging for these services, Dr. Butler, Chief Surgeon, has this to say: "talk of...charges has often come before, but usually quiets down when actual statistics are faced."<sup>58</sup>

In 1954 the American Medical Association commended the City of San Francisco at its convention for its "exemplary service" which was "provided free of charge by the citywide system."<sup>59</sup> Various magazines and newspapers published pieces in praise of the system.<sup>60</sup>

That same year Edmund Butler died. Dr. Geiger is gone as well by this time -- he retired in 1952. And the Director of Public Health turned over responsibility for administering the emergency hospital system to the chief ambulance steward to save the City money.<sup>61</sup>

#### HISTORY: Struggle to Stay Open & Changing Times: 1956 - 1978

In 1956, the emergency hospitals were threatened with closure and there was a massive campaign to keep them open. Letters and telegrams were written to Mayor George Christopher by hundreds of citizens, neighborhood improvement associations, and from the Director of Public Health himself, Dr. Ellis D. Sox.<sup>62</sup> The constantly fluctuating funding situation probably had multiple reasons for existing. But the changes in administration at the Department of Public Health and the loss of Butler and Geiger's advocacy would have been major contributing factors. In addition, San Francisco's population peaked in 1950 and began dropping until well into the 1980s. This drop would have contributed to socio-economic changes in the City, including a change in the amount of taxes collected for the general fund.<sup>63</sup> But it is easy to imagine how the demand for free emergency healthcare could never be fully met.

In 1963, the *San Francisco City Employees Digest*, declared that "San Francisco is unique among all the cities of the world in the type of service rendered by its Emergency Hospitals." They are open "24 hours daily, 365 days a year, treating all who come in without regard for race, creed or financial status."<sup>64</sup> In 1964, another newspaper photo-feature "Night Emergency" shows the gritty nature of the work which is "provided by the city without charge."<sup>65</sup> An article in *Time Magazine* in April 1964 featured the system which was referred to as the most outstanding in the country.<sup>66</sup> However, in the 1960s, there were also several newspaper articles which reported about the Alemany Emergency Hospital serving people from outside San Francisco county -- this was very controversial. Treating patients from other counties would have been an additional burden on the system.<sup>67</sup>

In fact, before 1966, there were no emergency rooms in San Francisco hospitals, other than San Francisco General Hospital.<sup>68</sup> Consider, also, that the 911 emergency call service was not in use in the United States until 1968.<sup>69</sup> One of Geiger's improvements to the system had been to equip the ambulances with radio-speaker systems so the drivers could both hear the calls and answer them. Previously they had to rely on the Police Call Boxes which were located around the city.<sup>70</sup> In 1969, a new Harbor Emergency Hospital was built on top of the brand-new Broadway Tunnel at Mason Street to replace the original Harbor Emergency Hospital which was being demolished as a result of the Rockefeller Embarcadero Center Project.<sup>71</sup> This replacement for Harbor Emergency was open for only a few years: one must assume that sustainable funding for the operation of the facility was the issue.<sup>72</sup> "City Charges for Emergency Care" is a featured newspaper article in 1969<sup>73</sup> indicating one solution to the continuing funding problems.

By 1974, "San Francisco differs from other cities...in that 50% of its emergency...care...is provided by the public sector...through the Public Health Department...which works in concert...with private ambulance companies and private hospitals."<sup>74</sup> This illustrates the expansion of emergency services at the private hospitals throughout the City. At the same time, the City's population was continuing to drop.

#### HISTORY: The End of the System: 1978

1978 was a fateful and infamous year for San Francisco -- major events later that year would have overshadowed Dr. Silverman's news. On July 14, 1978, Dr. Mervyn Silverman, the new Director of Public Health, announced the closing of the remaining Emergency Hospitals: Park, the recently rebuilt Harbor, and Alemany.

In response, Excelsior District neighbors, organized by the group COMO (Communities of the Outer Mission Organization), demonstrated against the closure of the Alemany Emergency Hospital. They occupied the buildings with "sit-ins" for over a month to protest its closure.<sup>75</sup> Despite major citywide protests, by August 24, 1978, San Francisco's Emergency Hospital System, as it was known, was abandoned.<sup>76</sup>

In 1979, Roger Boas was the City's Chief Administrative Officer. He was a "former auto dealer with no prior medical or administrative experience." He was known as a "callous, ruthless individual who rode roughshod over all the agencies under his control" which included the Department of Public Health and the Emergency Hospital System.<sup>77</sup>

An article titled "The Remaking of SF's Ambulance Service" appeared in 1980 and described a more efficient system which is no longer free. It also refers to federal funds which were used for retraining staff, since "we just don't have the money" in the Health Department's budget.<sup>78</sup>

The effects of Proposition 13 and the resulting forced budget cuts, in addition to the ongoing and destabilizing financial difficulties, would have been the "last straw" in the demise of San Francisco's emergency hospital system. Additionally, increasing demands on the service, the competition from private health care institutions, and the growing number of private emergency rooms would have been contributing factors. Continued adaptations and changes in the field like the overall centralization of services, the Health Maintenance Organization Act of 1973<sup>79</sup>, and improvements in technology (like the 911 call center) would also have been factors. The continuing drop in the City's population through 1980 certainly had an impact as this era drew to an end.

Today, affordable health care is a major economic and political issue almost everywhere. According to the Wikipedia article on General Hospital, 80% of their patient population today either receives publicly funded health insurance or is uninsured<sup>80</sup> -- one assumes that this translates into a lot of free emergency care. The religious-based hospitals in town may also continue to underwrite a certain percentage of such services as well.

#### HISTORY: The Hospitals and Major Historic Events

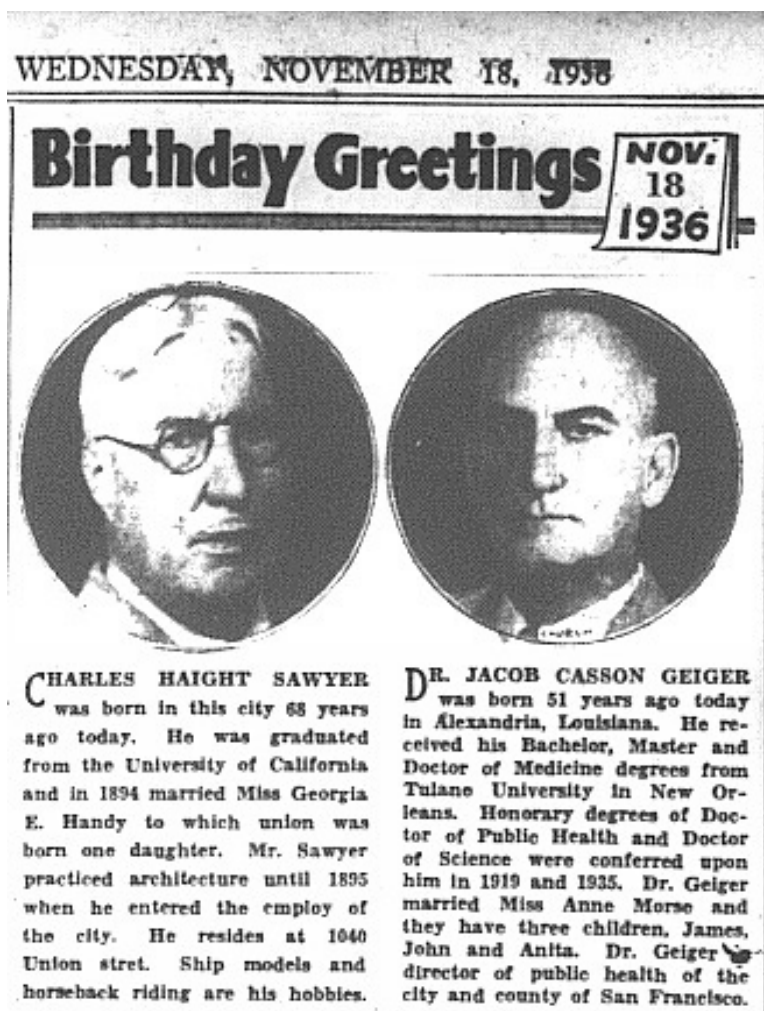
There is no doubt as to the important work done at these facilities during times of emergency. The Park Emergency Hospital played a critical role during the disaster of April 18, 1906. The building was so damaged that the staff set up shop in tents and the nearby tunnel to Golden Gate Park where they attended to the injured as best they could.<sup>81</sup> The handwritten ledgers in which the patients were logged on April 18th and the days following are a fascinating record of

the disaster.<sup>82</sup> The Park Emergency Hospital today is a renovated and beautifully restored building and was designated San Francisco Landmark #201 in 1991.<sup>83</sup>)

DATE	TIME	NAME	RESIDENCE	BROUGHT FROM	BROUGHT IN BY
Apr. 16	9 <sup>30</sup> AM	Chester Allen	302 Carl St	Same	In friend.
"	17	M.A. Morgan	1757 Miller	Same	Self
"	11	Paul Devine	2045 - 10th Street	Park Dept	Ambulance
"	12 <sup>30</sup>	John McHenry	1265 N. Point St	Base Ball Ground	Self
"	5 <sup>30</sup> PM	Walter Knapp	#1462 - 8 <sup>th</sup> Ave	Play ground	Ground
"	6 <sup>30</sup> AM	John Douglas	Broderick & Sutter	Home	Off St. Patrol
"	"	Carl Westrich	1530 9 <sup>th</sup> Ave		Self
"	6 <sup>30</sup> AM	J. W. Strong	1776 Page	Same	Self
"	6 <sup>30</sup> AM	D. Hammett	1373 Eddy	6th & Townsend	Friends
"	"	Ar. Duff	Pumping Station	Pumping Station	Self
"	"	Louise Duff	Pumping Station	Same	Same
"	7 <sup>30</sup>	And. G. Lee	1465 46 <sup>th</sup> Ave	By friends in Auto	
"	8 <sup>30</sup>	P.C. Lee	600 Davis St	Hayes - Davis	
"	9 <sup>30</sup>	Mrs. Bailey	257 Chapman	Home	Self
"	11 AM	H. J. Judd	374 Frederick	Same	Friends
"	3 <sup>10</sup> PM	Mrs. J. O'Brien	1520 Church St	Central Coy. 248	Ambulance
"	12 <sup>00</sup>	J. D. Hall	Hayes 1964	Central Emergency	
"	12 <sup>00</sup>	Mr. Wm. Murray	142 S. 14 <sup>th</sup> Ave	Basin	
"	12 <sup>30</sup>	Mr. Wm. Hoff	Park Pumping Stn	Amputation	Life saving crew
"	12 <sup>30</sup>	Mr. Hoff			
"	1 PM	Philip Jones	115 - 2 <sup>nd</sup> St	Same	
"	5 <sup>30</sup> PM	James	524 Shrader	Same	Friends
"	"	Mrs. Mary Suiat	401 Domestic St	Amisadero	Amb
"	"	Mrs. J. Mathews	St. Thomas Hosp	St. Thomas Hosp	
"	"	Mrs. M. Kotel	Manhattan Hosp	Manhattan Hosp	
"	"	Mrs. Lewis	763 Ellis St	460 Ellis St	
"	"	Mrs. Louis Duff	1630 27 <sup>th</sup> St	Park Hospital	Ambulance
"	"	Mrs. A. O'Brien		Friends	Ambulance
"	"	Max. Walker	16 Fulton St	16 Fulton	Amb
"	"	Miss Schaner	1456 Howard	1456 Howard	Amb

San Francisco Department of Public Health Records, 1865-1951, SFH 63, Park Emergency Hospital Ledger, 1906, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library

The Mission Emergency hospital played a major role during the Longshoreman's Strike in 1934.<sup>84</sup> Central Emergency treated a thousand patients on V-J (Victory in Japan) night, including "a score of women raped by men unnoticed in a city gone wild"<sup>85</sup> during "a victory riot that left 11 dead, 1,000 injured and the city's reputation besmirched."<sup>86</sup> The admirable work by the staff resulted in a formal commendation from Mayor Lapham on September 4, 1945, to all the personnel of the Emergency Hospital Service "for Loyalty and Devotion to Duty" and for their "great work in caring for the many victims during the V-J Day" celebration and rioting.<sup>87</sup>



San Francisco Chronicle, 18November1936, p. 36

### HISTORY: Sawyer & Geiger: Collaborators on the Alemany Project

Charles H. Sawyer, the City Architect who designed the Alemany Emergency Hospital and Health Center buildings and Dr. Jacob Geiger, Director of Public Health, shared a birthday which was an item of note in the *San Francisco Chronicle* in 1936.<sup>88</sup> Another thing they shared was the Alemany Emergency Hospital and Health Center, a project on which they collaborated.

The bond which funded the Alemany project also funded the Civic Center Health Administration Building and updates at General Hospital -- Sawyer and Geiger worked with Mayor Rossi to make "best use" of those monies.<sup>89</sup> Later, in 1937, Sawyer worked with Geiger on improvements at General and Laguna Honda hospitals -- projects which had received additional bond monies.<sup>90</sup> Over the course of their careers they would have worked together on numerous projects.

If Sawyer was notable for his modest, hard-working ways, Geiger was the opposite. Geiger ran San Francisco's Health Department from 1931 to 1952 and by the time he retired from the City in 1952, he was a celebrity and perhaps, one might say, the "Dr. Phil" of his day. He was a "character who was incredibly dedicated and also a thorn-in-the-side of everyone at the Board of Supervisors."<sup>91</sup> He "was responsible for organizing San Francisco's system of emergency hospitals."<sup>92</sup> And his long tenure would have provided the continuity for it. He was Director of Public Health, from 1931-1952, a period of time during which the Alemany Hospital was built, and the emergency hospital system thrived.

Geiger began his public health career as the assistant director of laboratories for the State Board of Health from 1913-1916. By the end of his career, and after his second retirement (from the city of Oakland)<sup>93</sup> he had received 38 awards from 34 nations for his work in public health.<sup>94</sup> Geiger was featured in national magazines which described his heroic deeds and magnetic personality. "Mixing medicine with tricks of a side-show barker, Public Health Director Geiger keeps San Franciscans excited about staying fit. Not since the earthquake has anything so dynamic hit the "healthiest big city in the world." He was credited with San Francisco having the lowest infant mortality rate in the United States<sup>95</sup> and with solving the national crises with botulism and listeria outbreaks.<sup>96</sup>

He was known in the office for his use of green ink when signing orders or correspondence

*because green means go. The green memos have top priority and employees drop all other work when one of them shows up.<sup>97</sup> Weather permitting, he likes to spend mornings on the roof of the four-story Health Building, stripped to the waist, signing his office correspondence at a table set up especially for him.<sup>98</sup>*

#### HISTORY: Charles H. Sawyer, City Architect

Charles Haight Sawyer, was born in San Francisco on November 18, 1868 and died in Palo Alto on April 21, 1952.<sup>99</sup> He retired, as City Architect for San Francisco's Bureau of Architecture, in 1938 after over thirty-four years of service to the City.<sup>100</sup> His uncle, Henry H. Haight was California's tenth Governor and his grandfather, Fletcher M. Haight was appointed U.S. Judge for Southern California by Abraham Lincoln.<sup>101</sup>





City architect presenting James Lick Junior High School to President and Commissioner of Board of Education, 1932 [AAD-4541] San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.

The 1896 City Directory lists Sawyer as a Produce Commission Merchant with an office on Front Street. One source reported that he “practiced architecture until 1895 when he entered the employ of the city.”<sup>102</sup> But the disaster of 1906, which created a tremendous need for architects and builders, definitely provided the impetus for Sawyer to seek and accept a position with the City. He joined the Board of Public Works in 1907 as a draftsman and lived with his wife Georgia and daughter Carlotta at 2891 Vallejo Street.<sup>103</sup> By the late 1920s he had moved to 1020 Union Street where he lived, until approximately 1940.<sup>104</sup>

By 1914 his title with the City had become “Building Inspector, Bureau of Public Works” a position he held, in one form or another, through 1926.<sup>105</sup> From 1927 through 1930, his title varied from “Head of Bureau of Architecture” to “Chief of the City’s Bureau of Architecture” to “Acting City Architect” to “Head of the City’s Architectural Bureau.”

In 1930, he won an increase in salary, from \$500 to \$600 per month, as the “acting city architect and superintendent of the bureau of architects.”<sup>106</sup> This was noted in the newspapers at a time when the Great Depression was impacting the country. He had to sue the City to receive the raise<sup>107</sup> and in 1931 his friends had to ask the Mayor to formally appoint him so he could take

the oath under the new City Charter.<sup>108</sup> By 1931, Charles H. Sawyer was officially, technically, and finally the City Architect and Superintendent for the Bureau of Architecture for the City and County of San Francisco -- a position he held until 1938.<sup>109</sup>

Between 1933-1937, in addition to planning and designing buildings, Sawyer was busy coordinating jobs with the Department of Public Works; collaborating with the Board of Education;<sup>110</sup> surveying the school building projects;<sup>111</sup> negotiating contract disputes and lawsuits about hiring practices and contracts;<sup>112</sup> traveling to Sacramento to investigate charges related to faulty construction in the school buildings;<sup>113</sup> and working with PWA (Public Works Administration) bond monies for both school and hospital buildings.<sup>114</sup>



"Architect at the State Convention,"  
Architect & Engineer, November 1937, 56

As early as 1909, and before he held the formal title, Sawyer was involved in professional architectural activities and served as Vice President of the San Francisco Architectural Club.<sup>115</sup> Much later, in 1937, he attended the State Association of California Architects conference and here's how he was described in a report of that event:

*...the man who, to a more or less extent, weaves the destinies of San Francisco's municipal architecture--particularly school buildings--Charles H. Sawyer, was just as backward about posing for this picture as he is modest and unassuming in his official duties at the City Hall. It is no easy job, the one which entitles Mr. Sawyer to the rank of City Architect, but one never hears him complain.<sup>116</sup>*

C.H. Sawyer survived the catastrophe of 1906 and learned his craft as a civil servant during the City's rebuilding. Work, given the scope and amount of building completed in the city during this time, he must have taken great pride in. Please note, that he is not to be confused with Houghton Sawyer, an architect of reputation and of the same time period, who is known for his work on large, private residences, and well-appointed apartment buildings.<sup>117</sup> C.H. Sawyer's more mundane, but nonetheless significant work was on civic buildings intended to last and stand as testaments to the public good. His influence as City Architect extended through the Great Depression. And while San Francisco's diverse economy may have been less impacted than other parts of the country by the Depression, these would have been difficult economic times.

In 1936, Sawyer, along with Joe Di Maggio, placed a New Year's greeting in the newspaper: "Season's Greetings - Charles H. Sawyer - City Architect."<sup>118</sup> But the following anecdote is more indicative of his character and attitude toward his work. There was a retirement party for Chief Examiner Maher and Charles H. Sawyer on November 30th, 1938 at which Mayor Rossi presided. Maher was feted by the Civil Service Commission, which presented him with a commemorative scroll and a radio for his 46 years of service. Sawyer, who had 34 years of service, "was too busy with current PWA (Public Works Administration) school and hospital building plans to do other than take congratulations...in stride. He said he would continue with his work until his successor (Dodge A. Riedy<sup>119</sup>) becomes familiar with it."<sup>120</sup>

#### *Sawyer's School Buildings*

The San Francisco Public School's *Report of the Superintendent* from 1931 describes the impressive building program: "In the past ten years the citizens of San Francisco have erected 49 new school buildings and recently the Board of Education approved plans for a fiftieth structure...the tremendous task of re-creating more than half of the physical properties of the...school system...the progress in erecting permanent, lasting educational structures has been greater than that made in any period of the previous seventy years." 1930 had marked the 80th anniversary of the school district.<sup>121</sup>

“Commenting on the San Francisco schools, Miss Alice Barrows of the Office of Education, Department of the Interior, said: ...the “buildings are not only well planned, they are beautiful as well. That is an innovation which I shall report to other cities that I visit...I only hope that many other cities will follow your example in bringing color into the school buildings...the housing of these schools into modern buildings within a period of twelve years is a remarkable achievement.”<sup>122</sup>



City architect presenting James Lick Junior High School to President and Commissioner of Board of Education, 1932  
[AAD-4537]  
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.

San Francisco’s building program was “the envy of other cities...funds for this tremendous and unprecedented school construction program” were raised through a bond measure passed in 1924.<sup>123</sup> But the building of new schools was halted in 1930. In December 1933 another bond measure was passed by popular demand to accommodate the growing population. This enabled the program to continue its removal of “wooden school buildings” and improve their earthquake resistance.<sup>124</sup>

### *Sawyer's Other Buildings*

As City Architect, C.H. Sawyer would have overseen the school building program and been responsible for selecting the architects for these projects. He planned and designed some projects himself such as the chapel at General Hospital<sup>125</sup>, the fire house at 41st and Geary<sup>126</sup>, and the girls' gymnasium at Polytechnic High School<sup>127</sup>. Presumably, he would have enjoyed these smaller-scale design projects as a break from his routine administrative duties.



The Chapel at SF General Hospital, Charles H. Sawyer, City Architect. [AAD-0445]  
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.



Group of girls standing outside of the Polytechnic High School Girls' Gym, 1937, [AAD-4884]  
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.



San Francisco Fire Department Engine 34 - Geary Boulevard and 41st Avenue, Charles H. Sawyer, City Architect. [AAD-8157]  
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.

HISTORY: The Alemany Buildings & Their Use Over Time

These two buildings provided emergency and first aid services beginning in 1933 and were operating, at full or limited capacity, through 1978. In 1943, during WWII, the Alemany Emergency Hospital was closed for a short period of time due to a shortage of doctors.<sup>128</sup> In the mid 1950s there were pre-natal and maternity classes held at the Alemany Health Center (and several neighbors remember using them when they were young mothers.)<sup>129</sup> They were threatened with closure in 1956 but appear to have continued operating until the summer of 1978.



Alemany Emergency Hospital & Health Center, Onondaga and Alemany Boulevard, 1933 [AAD-0047]  
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.

By July 14, 1978, Alemany and the emergency system were again threatened with closure and a letter writing campaign, demonstrations, and sit-ins ensued. Neighbors, occupied the Alemany hospital for over a month and attempted to provide medical services with volunteers. They literally moved into the building and prepared meals, slept, and cleaned up after themselves.<sup>130</sup> Despite their efforts, by August 24, 1978, the Emergency Hospital System was defunct.<sup>131</sup>

However, the ambulance service was restored in 1978. It continued to run out of the Alemany Hospital building.<sup>132</sup> Newspaper articles indicate that by May 1980, there was still an ambulance service running out of the Alemany Emergency Hospital building.<sup>133</sup>

By 1982, the buildings were leased to St. Luke's Hospital. Between 1992 - 2011 St. Mary's Hospital ran a Senior Activities Center out of the Health Center building which several of our neighbors made use of. The Keystone Vocational Training School was also a tenant during this time. In 2011 St. Mary's Hospital was notifying its clients that the program was closing due to lack of funding.<sup>134</sup> The Alemany Emergency Hospital and Health Center buildings' ownership was transferred in 2010 from the Department of Public Health to the City's Real Estate Division.<sup>135</sup> The buildings have been vacant since then.

In 2012 Garavaglia Architecture Inc. was hired by the Real Estate Division to do a study of the Bernard Zakheim murals inside the Health Center building.<sup>136</sup> On 20 May 2015, the Historic Preservation Commission voted to add the Alemany Hospital and Health Center buildings, along with the Zakheim murals, to the Landmark Designation Work Program, and recommended further study.



Alemany Emergency Hospital & Health Center, Onondaga and Alemany Boulevard, 1933. [AAD-0045]  
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.

### HISTORY: Residents Still Remember

Many district residents, of varying ages, remember being treated at these buildings. The late Martha Chase attended senior services there for many years before she died just a few years ago. Emily Powell remembers, in 1938, having stitches there after being hit by a car on Mission Street; Betty Castagnola, in her 80s, remembers getting stitches there frequently since she was a “tomboy”; Lydia Marciano, in her 80s, took advantage of the baby wellness program when she was a young mother; Denise Ruggieri, in her 60s remembers being treated there as a child many times; Rita Gelini, in her 60s, distinctly remembers going there in 1960 for her immunization shot; Nancy Pannous, in her 60s, remembers taking her mother there on Thanksgiving Day to get stitches after she cut herself slicing the turkey; Nancy also remembers going to Harbor Emergency after having her toe stepped on at a high school dance; Delia Kutches, in her 90s, worked at the Alemany as a nurse. Joe Flanders, in his 80s, drove an ambulance out of Alemany and the other emergency hospitals until they closed. Valerie Reichert, in her 60s, remembers being treated at the Park Emergency as a very young child after swallowing nail polish remover. David Hooper, in his 60s, as a scrappy Mission kid, remembers being treated at several of the Emergency Hospitals during his youth.<sup>137</sup>

These buildings represent a time when people, lived, worked, went to school, shopped, and received first aid treatment near home. This was a time when people in the Outer Mission and Excelsior Districts rarely went downtown to shop because Mission Street was a vibrant commercial strip. Downtown was for special events and required white gloves for the ladies.

The Alemany Emergency Hospital and Health Center, as part of the citywide emergency hospital system, is part of San Francisco history. But, on a local level, these buildings played an important role in the lives of our neighbors as well. These emergency hospitals were effective, neighborhood first-aid centers which served the community well before we had innovative technologies like the 911 system<sup>138</sup> and affordable health insurance plans.





Portrait of the artist, Bernard Baruch Zakheim, 1920s

*History of Medicine in California Articulated in Frescoes*, Robert S. Sherins, UCSF Sesquicentennial Celebration, [2014]

### HISTORY: Bernard Zakheim, Muralist

Bernard Baruch Zakheim was born in Warsaw, Poland on April 4, 1896 (some sources report 1898<sup>139</sup>) and died on Thanksgiving Day, November 28th, 1985 at the Jewish Home for the Aged,<sup>140</sup> in San Francisco. He was still painting up until two weeks before his death.<sup>141</sup>

He was the youngest son from a wealthy family of Hasidic Jews who had an extremely difficult time convincing his mother that he had to be an artist. The compromise led to him learning upholstery and furniture design in addition to his study of fine arts at the Warsaw Academy. During World War I, he became politically active and interested in workers' rights, joined the Polish Army in 1918, and was later captured and held for nine months in a German prisoner of war camp.<sup>142</sup> After his release, he studied art at the Danzig Polytechnicum where he met and then married Eda Spiegelman, "a young dramatist," with whom he eventually had two

daughters.<sup>144</sup> They arrived in New York City in the fall of 1920, staying briefly before they traveled to San Francisco. A job in a furniture factory took them to Los Angeles where their first daughter was born in 1921. After three years, they returned to San Francisco where Zakheim studied at the School of Fine Arts, but he became disillusioned by the instruction there which ended his formal art education. In 1925, at age twenty-seven, [sic] he opened a custom furniture business and based it on the European Guild model. His company was the first in San Francisco to offer a 44-hour work week which included paid vacation time.<sup>145</sup> Additionally, he “was the moving spirit in organizing the Yiddish Folkschule at 1057 Steiner Street”<sup>146</sup> ... and became a “leader in the Yiddish movement in San Francisco.”<sup>147</sup>

He “rented a small studio at the California School of Fine Arts” (the San Francisco Art Institute) for a short period, while trying to find a balance between his family life, business, and artwork.<sup>148</sup> He sent sketches to Diego Rivera and, after invited, traveled to Mexico to study with him. Zakheim returned to San Francisco by June of 1930 with Rivera’s encouragement to put “something of his own soil, of his own people” into his art.<sup>149 150</sup>



Bernard Zakheim and Julia Rogers work on Coit Tower mural, 1934, photograph by Peter Stackpole. Courtesy of Archives of American Art website

In 1931, he left his wife in San Francisco to run the furniture business while he went to Europe -- first Paris, then Florence -- to study art. He visited a small Hungarian town where he met an artist named Professor Gebauer<sup>150</sup> who painted frescoes. While there and with Gebauer's encouragement, Zakheim painted his first fresco titled *Jews in Poland*. Then early in 1932, while in Paris, he heard from home that his wife had lost the business due to the economic impact of the Great Depression. By this time a second daughter had been born.<sup>151</sup> By October 1932 he had returned to San Francisco, but not before begging his European family to leave Poland. Zakheim lost 300 relatives in the Holocaust<sup>152</sup> (which he paid tribute to in a later work, a sculpture titled *Monument to the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising*.)<sup>153</sup>



*The Wedding Ceremony*, Jewish Community Center, 1933 [HABS CAL,38-SANFRA,204--18]  
Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington

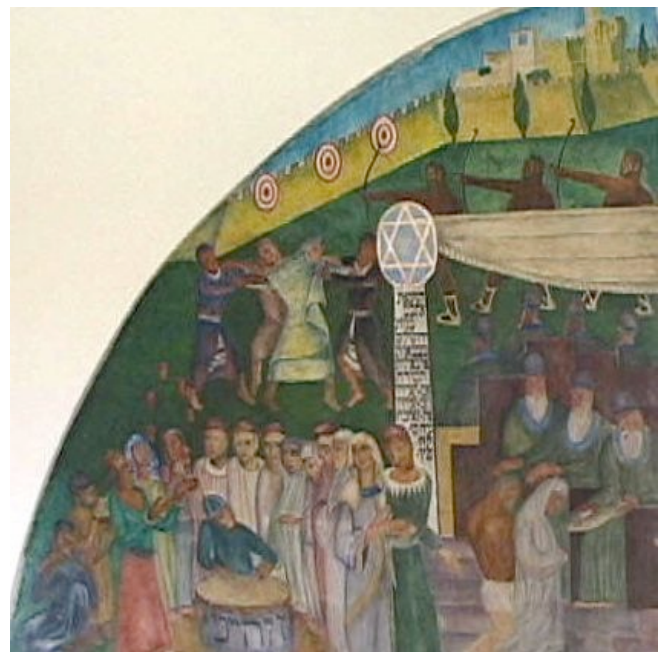
### *Zakheim's JCC Mural*

In 1933, three years after his meeting with Rivera, Zakheim won a commission to paint a mural at the new San Francisco Jewish Community Center. The JCC's leaders were interested in reaching out to "a broader segment of society" with their programming<sup>154</sup> and Zakheim had previously convinced the Board of the JCC to change its selection method from direct commission to open competition.<sup>155</sup> Newspapers reported that Zakheim's "vivid colored

fresco...attracted much attention from the thousands of visitors who flocked through the building during the dedication week program.”<sup>156</sup> It depicted a traditional Jewish wedding, and as Rivera had encouraged, featured “folkloric aspects of Jewish culture.”<sup>157</sup> Zakheim “says this is the first<sup>158</sup> [mural] in San Francisco to be exposed to the fog and rain.” It was reported that he painted in “the primitive...two dimensional style of the modern Mexican school,”<sup>159</sup> a direct reference to Rivera’s influence. This fresco was moved to the third floor stairwell when the Jewish Community Center was rebuilt: it was reinstalled and rededicated in 2004 where it is currently open to the public. Zakheim also designed the mosaic fountain in the patio area which we believe was destroyed during the JCC’s reconstruction.<sup>160</sup>



Bernard Zakheim working on an Ancient Jewish Wedding mural at Jewish Community Center, 1933, [AAK-1475]  
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library



*The Jewish Wedding*, fully restored, 3rd floor of the new JCC building, photo courtesy of Albert Neiman, [www.bernardzakheim.com](http://www.bernardzakheim.com)

### Zakheim's Coit Tower Mural

"The hand of the Mexican master (Diego Rivera) is especially evident in the extraordinary Coit Tower murals (of 1934). The tower had just been opened to the public when San Francisco artists led by Bernard Zakheim demanded that they be put to work in the newly created PWAP."<sup>161</sup>

The Public Works of Art Project, or PWAP, was the first of such programs and a predecessor to the WPA. It had a "very successful six-month life"..."paying 4,000 artists to produce almost 15,000 works of art" and led to the other "alphabet soup" of artists programs commonly known as WPA. The grants were intended to be based on merit, not on poverty. And Harry Hopkins's (FDR's emergency relief administrator) declaration that artists had "to eat just like other people" certainly influenced the decision to create such programs.<sup>162</sup>

"Twenty-five<sup>163</sup> artists, and nineteen assistants covered 3691 square feet of wall space...downstairs...two sides of the staircase, the second floor walls, and a small room upstairs...in all there are 31 frescoes and six oil lunettes in the tower."<sup>164</sup>



Coit Tower, *Library* fresco mural, courtesy of KALW.org

Rivera's influence on the Coit Tower artists was "overwhelming" with a "decorative and optimistic" style that most Americans accepted, while ignoring his Marxist politics.<sup>165</sup> Much has been written about the controversy of the four Coit Tower murals which prevented the Tower from opening to the public in April 1934. Zakheim, Victor Arnautoff, Clifford Wight (all of whom had worked with Rivera) and John Langley Howard "scandalized the City by including left-wing political commentary" in their murals.<sup>166</sup> This was happening, of course, at a time of great economic hardship during the Great Depression and just before the violence and upheaval of the Longshoremen's strike, protest, and riots which were to come later that summer. The building and murals were finally opened to the public in October 1934. (And today, these murals have been beautifully restored and are open to the public.)

No doubt that Zakheim's previous experience working with frescoes helped him win the Coit Tower job. In fact, he was one of the few artists who had experience painting frescoes.<sup>167</sup> Zakheim's mural, painted in 1934, is titled *Library*. It featured a portrait of artist John Langley Howard reaching for a book by Karl Marx titled *Das Kapital*.<sup>168</sup> *Heart's Examiner* featured a newspaper article with a "doctored" photo of Zakheim's mural, adding a hammer and sickle encircled by the slogan "Workers of the World Unite" over which a caption read "Here is the painting in the Coit Memorial Tower that has caused a bitter dispute."<sup>169</sup> Zakheim's response was "I have painted no hammer and sickle over my fresco or anywhere else...and the directors of the Public Works of Art Project have never asked me to change any part of my mural."<sup>170</sup> This was true. However, during the Coit Tower controversy, Fleishhacker had, indeed, asked him to edit his mural. And Zakheim's angry refusal, according to an interview with Lewis Ferbache in 1964, was "I am a hammer and sickle painter."<sup>171</sup>

Zakheim's interest in Communism can be found in his early years in Los Angeles. In the late 1920s he was deeply influenced by his friendship with Kenneth Rexroth who was engaging in Communist debates and organizing the Montgomery Block artists and writers. Together Zakheim and Rexroth assembled "the most coherent leftist group of artists and writers the city had ever seen."<sup>172</sup> Zakheim's admiration of the Soviet Union can be traced into the 1950s.<sup>173</sup>

### *Zakheim's Alemany Health Center Murals*

During the period following the completion of the Public Works of Art Program (PWAP), Zakheim was commissioned, in 1934, under the sponsorship of the SERA (State Emergency Relief Administration) to execute two frescoes in the Alemany Health Center, for the San Francisco Department of Public Health. Called *Community Spirit* and *Growth*, the “excellence of these murals was instrumental in an award to him of subsequent decorations in the University of California Hospital.”<sup>174</sup> Since the official opening of the Alemany Hospital and Health Center was in August 1933, the murals must have been completed while the center was in operation.

Here is a description of those murals, “which have been called a very beautiful piece of work” by Phyllis Wrightson (Zakheim’s assistant, who later became his second wife):<sup>175</sup>

*These frescoes were painted as decorations in the waiting room of San Francisco's Health Center. It is a small building in Mission style, of a homelike, rather cozy character, informally furnished and cheered with a large fireplace whose wide chimney extends in sloping lines up to the high ceiling. This chimney area is broken by the mezzanine balcony that crosses one side of the room, dividing this large chimney shape horizontally. In this space the frescoes have been painted.*

*The portion below the balcony is adapted in color and literary content to the room and its uses. It is entitled “Birth” (sic “Growth”<sup>176</sup>) and is an arrangement of symbolic figures in an elliptical pattern against a background of the slender silvery trunks of young fig trees, an ancient symbol of fertility.*

*At the right two lovers kneel side by side, a golden skinned young man and a girl draped in blue. The central figure is that of a woman with uplifted arms symbolizing the agony of birth. Before her a figure in white representing the functions of the nurse helps a young plant part its way out of the womb of the earth. Another couple at the left represent parenthood. The woman holds a little blossoming plant at which both look with concern and pride.*

*The golden color of some of the flesh, the red of the earth and the green of the foliage all repeat the coloring of the tile, the wicker furniture and the green metal railings of the room. The upper section of the fresco continues the trees seen below, their crown of leaves showing between bars of the balcony rail. Above the trees is a composite scene of the neighborhood, zigzagging up to Mount Davidson and its cross against the sky. Below is a group of houses so characteristic of San Francisco. Next to them is a row of the newer ‘pastry like’ contractor’s bungalows.*

*From the bottom of the scene Alemany Boulevard sweeps up past the little Health Center and its adjoining houses, and the massive Balboa High School.*

*At the lower right is a series of backyards animated with lines of washing and a vacant lot used by schoolboys as a baseball field. The latter was introduced by the artist to point out the dire need for a children's playground in this district.<sup>177</sup>*



*Community Spirit* and the whitewashed "Growth" murals at the Alemany Health Center, photos courtesy of Richard Rothman, 2014



The mural on the upper floor is titled *Community Spirit*. This mural is damaged but in relatively good condition. The mural on the first floor, *Growth*, as described by Wrightson, symbolically depicts birth, growth, and parenthood: we have not found any photographs or drawings depicting the entire mural. It was painted over in the mid 1970s -- perhaps because either the theme or the imagery was considered offensive.

We do know that, in a letter dated 17 February 1976, Zakheim wrote to Herb Caen about the Alemany mural: "Again they amputated [sic] a part of my soul. This time at the Alemany Baby Health Center...they painted over a half of my frescoe [sic], and this is the third time in a row." On 29 March 1976, Caen mentions Zakheim "frothing with anger" over the Alemany mural. He quotes Zakheim: "An insult! ... Besides, they've covered over the most important part of all -- the fertility rites!"<sup>178</sup>

In 2010, Zakheim's son, Nathan, inspected the "Community Spirit" mural and discovered and uncovered the small portion of the "Growth" mural that is visible today.<sup>179</sup> No work has been done on either mural since then. The buildings and murals have not been open to the public since 2011.

### *Zakheim's UCSF Murals*

In 1935-36 Zakheim, again with SERA funding, began two murals in UCSF's Cole Hall (the University of California, Medical School.) It has been suggested that his work at the Alemany Health Center helped him win this job at UCSF. Titled *Superstitious Medicine* and *Rational Medicine*, they were moved, in 1966, to their present location in the Health Sciences Building West at UCSF.



Bernard Zakheim and helpers work on designs for fresco for Toland Hall, 1937, [AAK-0588]  
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library

The Toland Hall amphitheater murals, completed in 1938, became a four year, ten panel project commissioned by Dr. Isabella Perry, after seeing the Alemany murals, and then spearheaded by Dr. Chauncey Leake. They were partially funded by the WPA.<sup>180</sup> This series of murals is titled the *History of Medicine in California* and they fill the walls of the lecture hall. These murals were also objected to and censored: in 1948 they were covered by wallpaper because of faculty complaints that they were distracting to students. The fact that the murals had attracted thousands of visitors to the school may have been a contributing factor in the decision to cover them. But a change in administration was probably the decisive factor.<sup>181</sup> Despite Zakheim's protests they were covered over. The wallpaper was finally removed during a general renovation in 1961.<sup>182</sup> Currently, they are open to the public for special events.



Bernard Zakheim at work on a mural for Toland Hall, 1937  
[MOR-0557]  
San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library



Recent Acquisition: Bernard Zakheim Collection, Brought To Light, UCSF blog, Posted on February 24, 2015  
by Polina Ilieva,  
[Viewing murals at Toland Hall, F. Stanley Durie, Dr. William E. Carter, Phyllis Wrightson, Joseph Allen (State Director of WPA Federal Art Project, Bernard Zakheim, circa 1939)]

*Zakheim's Later Murals*

Zakheim planned to do a four panel mural, in 1937, at the Union Recreation Center<sup>183</sup> at 32 Clay Street, titled *History of the San Francisco Waterfront*. The building is now gone and there is good evidence the murals were never completed.<sup>184</sup>

His last mural projects were in two post offices in Texas. The first was called, *New and Old Methods of Transportation*, 1938, in Mineola, Texas. The second, in Rusk, Texas, was titled *Agriculture and Industry*, 1939.



*New and Old Methods of Transportation*, 1938, Mineola (Texas) Post Office,  
[<http://www.texasescapes.com/TexasArt/Mineola-Texas-Post-Office-Mural.htm>] Photo courtesy Mineola Economic Development



*Agriculture and Industry*, 1939, Rusk (Texas) Post Office  
[<http://www.texasescapes.com/TexasArt/Rusk-Texas-Post-Office-Mural.htm>] Photos courtesy Gerald Massey

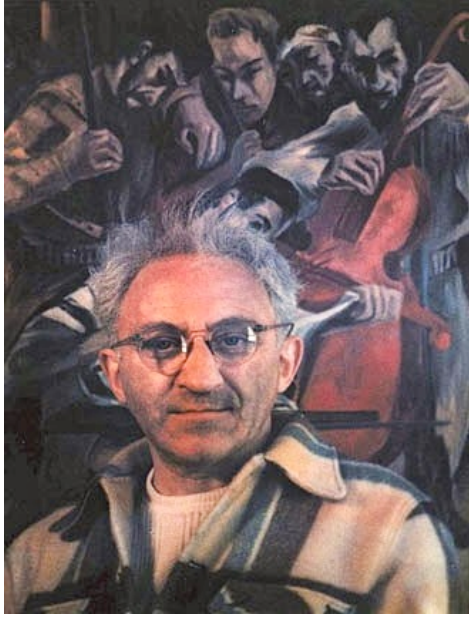
### *Zakheim's Later Years*

In the 1940's Zakheim moved to an apple farm in Sebastopol, California which he called *Farm Arts* where he lived for over 40 years.<sup>185</sup> He continued painting there and began sculpting in wood and granite. (One of his wooden sculptures, part of a recent bequest, is at UCSF.) He visited Poland again in 1961 where he was invited by the *Jewish Social and Cultural Society* to paint a mural which would be his last. He titled it *Songs of the Polish Jews*. At that time he said: "Fresco is my main interest...wall painting in the fresh wet cement is really the idiom of drama. For the artist to have a wall to paint fresco is a rare thing."<sup>186</sup>

Zakheim was awarded a Certificate of Honor "in appreciative public recognition of distinction and merit" by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in July 1972. He had a retrospective exhibition of his paintings at the Judah L. Magnes Memorial Museum in Berkeley in 1973 to celebrate his 75th [sic] birthday<sup>187</sup> and continued to make art until the end of his life. He died at the Jewish Home for the Aged in San Francisco, in 1985, where he had moved,<sup>188</sup> and which is just a few blocks from the Alemany Health Center and the murals he painted there.

The Sonoma County Museum had a memorial exhibition of his work in 1986.<sup>189</sup> His work is in the collections of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Brandeis University, and the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, Poland.<sup>190</sup> In 2001, during the conservation and move of Zakheim's mural at the Jewish Community Center, *San Francisco Chronicle's* art critic Allan Temko said of him: "he wasn't a Michelangelo...but his work is good, for what it is, and worth saving."<sup>191</sup>

Zakheim's murals at the Alemany Health Center, celebrate community and depict the neighborhood, in a building which, at one time, offered free health service to people twenty-four hours a day, every day. These are values which perfectly align with Zakheim's political views. As such, the Alemany Hospital building is a fine setting for Zakheim's allegorical imagery. We believe that the building and the murals should be saved and restored. Bernard Zakheim was an important artist who worked during a significant time in San Francisco's history. His legacy should be preserved, not just for the sake of the Excelsior District, but for the benefit of the City at large.



Bernard Baruch Zakheim by Imogen Cunningham  
photo courtesy of Albert Neiman, [www.bernardzakheim.com](http://www.bernardzakheim.com)



Phyllis Wrightson, Circa 1925  
Phyllis Wrightson, circa 1925,  
UCSF Sesquicentennial, Robert Sherwin, 2014

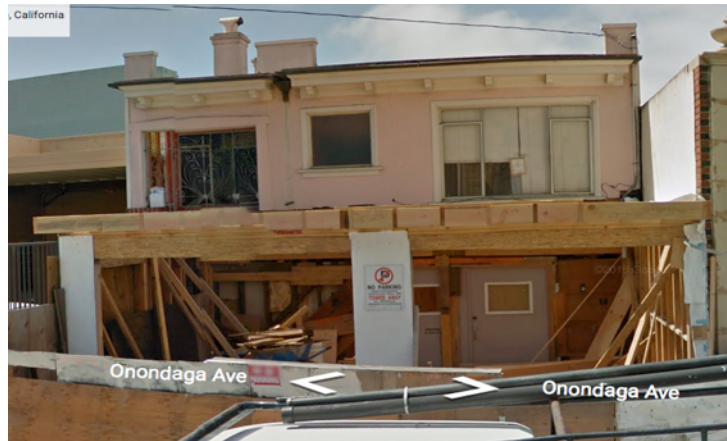
### The Neighborhood Description

The Excelsior District and Outer Mission in general do not have many architecturally significant buildings. The Balboa High School, the San Miguel School, the Geneva Office Building, and the telephone building are the most notable buildings in the district and are all nearby. But the bulk of the district is made up of modest, single-family, working class homes. The shopping area, one block away on Mission Street, is made up of many single and two story buildings. The older, more substantial markets, banks, and theaters generally have been converted to other uses.



Top: Pacific Telephone & Telegraph Company building at Alemany Boulevard and Onondaga Avenue, 1946  
[AAD-5750] San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library  
Bottom: telephone building, 2015, photo courtesy Lisa Dunseth

The Alemany Emergency Hospital and Health Center buildings sit directly across the street from one of the distinctive Art Deco-style telephone buildings -- together they anchor the intersection of Alemany Boulevard and Onondaga Avenue. The telephone building is a three story, brick and stone, commercial building and houses communications equipment for AT&T. It is the largest, significant building in the immediate neighborhood.



Immediately next door at 25 Onondaga is a one-story, stucco building which has been undergoing renovations for the past five years. [top] There is a one story U.S. Post Office building with a stucco exterior, at 15 Onondaga, built in the 1950s. [middle] The one-story Croatian American Cultural Center is kitty-corner from the hospital. [bottom] Photos courtesy Google Street View, 2015.



Further down the block, one can see in the distance, the Balboa High School.



View from the Health Center looking northwest toward the Croation American building.



Acknowledgements

Stephanie Cajina, Executive Director of the Excelsior Action Group (EAG); Linda Litehiser, founder of Friends & Advocates of Crocker-Amazon & The Excelsior (FACE); and Jorge Palafox, President of the Cayuga Improvement Association (CIA); are in favor of this landmarking effort.

District 11 Supervisor John Avalos supports the effort to landmark the Zakheim murals and is interested in discussing the inclusion of the buildings in this application. We continue to solicit support from other neighborhood and district organizations and expect this list of advocates to grow.

Many thanks to William Kostura, Gary A. Goss, Richard Rothman, Joe Flanders, Jonathan Lammers, Rich Ayres, Catherine Powell, and Kathy Borgogno for their help with this project.

Lisa Dunseth, 6 November 2015

- <sup>1</sup> "City Hospitals Face Crisis in Fund Shortage," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 6December1933
- <sup>2</sup> "Emergency Hospital Service," *San Francisco City Employees Digest*, September 1963, p.6. VF-Health Department-Paramedic Division; San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library
- <sup>3</sup> Vertical File-Emergency Hospitals- "Compiled for the 1954 Convention of the American Medical Association", San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library
- <sup>4</sup> "S.F. Emergency Hospital" by George Dusheck, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 17December1946
- <sup>5</sup> *Catastrophes, Epidemics and Neglected Diseases* by F. William Blaisdell and Moses Grossman, The San Francisco General Hospital Foundation, 1999, p.119.
- <sup>6</sup> *Catastrophes, Epidemics and Neglected Diseases* by F. William Blaisdell and Moses Grossman, The San Francisco General Hospital Foundation, 1999, p.119.
- <sup>7</sup> Examiner News Clippings, San Francisco-Health Centers-Alemany Health Center, "3 Supervisors ask review of aid stations" 26July1978, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library
- <sup>8</sup> By 1980, the City had reverted to Citywide elections. "District Elections in San Francisco," SPUR: <http://www.spur.org/publications/article/2000-02-01/district-elections-san-francisco>
- <sup>9</sup> Examiner News Clippings, San Francisco-Health Centers-Alemany Health Center, "S.F. Hospital Protest Is Becoming a Stay-in" 15August1978, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library
- <sup>10</sup> *Catastrophes, Epidemics and Neglected Diseases* by F. William Blaisdell and Moses Grossman, The San Francisco General Hospital Foundation, 1999, p.119.
- <sup>11</sup> *San Francisco Department of Public Health Records Finding Aid*, SFH 63, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.
- <sup>12</sup> *The Establishment of San Francisco's Municipal Ambulance Service* by James Green, 1990, p.4 [VF-Health Dept.-Paramedic Division-San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library]
- <sup>13</sup> Vertical File- Bonfils, Winifred, "Annie Laurie: on a sentimental journalist", Summer 1981, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library
- <sup>14</sup> "Drops Dead After Giving Alms To Mendicant," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 19December1914, p. 1.
- <sup>15</sup> City Charges for Emergency Care," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 29September 1969
- <sup>16</sup> "The Remaking of SF's Ambulance Service," *San Francisco Today*, 3September 1980 [VF-SF Health Dept.-Paramedics Division, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library]
- <sup>17</sup> "The Remaking of SF's Ambulance Service," *San Francisco Today*, 3September 1980 [VF-SF Health Dept.-Paramedics Division, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library]
- <sup>18</sup> *The History of The Surgical Service at San Francisco General Hospital* by William Schecter, Robert Lim, George Sheldon, Norman Christensen, William Blaisdell, 2007, p.18-19
- <sup>19</sup> *San Francisco City Directories*, 1933-40, San Francisco Public Library
- <sup>20</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*, 20February1916
- <sup>21</sup> *The History of The Surgical Service at San Francisco General Hospital* by William Schecter, Robert Lim, George Sheldon, Norman Christensen, William Blaisdell, 2007, p.19
- <sup>22</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*, 1March1920

<sup>23</sup> *Proposed Charter Amendments and Bond Propositions*-to be submitted November 6, 1928; p. 81. San Francisco Ballot Propositions Database, San Francisco Public Library, Government Information Center. The Hassler Health Farm in San Mateo County, for tuberculosis patients operated roughly between 1926-1972, and, since 1983, has been the Pulgas Ridge Preserve Open Space.[<http://www.openspace.org/preserves/pulgas-ridge>] The Health Administration building at Civic Center (the Public Health building) and improvements at Laguna Honda and General Hospital were major elements of this bond. The Alemany project would have been part of the “erection of Health Centers in districts throughout San Francisco.”

<sup>24</sup> “Hassler Asks \$2,810,461” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 26April 1928

<sup>25</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*, 25August1928

<sup>26</sup> “S.F. Clubs Indorse Hospital Bond Issue,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 8October1928

<sup>27</sup> “Last Appeal Made For Health Bonds,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 5November1928

<sup>28</sup> “Supervisor’s Proceedings,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 18November 1930

<sup>29</sup> <http://www.openspace.org/preserves/pulgas-ridge>

<sup>30</sup> Examiner News Clippings, San Franciso-Health Centers-Alemany Health Center, “Bonds Accepted By Contractor On Health Center”, 12February1932, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library

<sup>31</sup> “Bill No. 9482, Ordinance No. 9068,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 2October1931

<sup>32</sup> “Last Appeal Made For Health Bonds,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 5November1928

<sup>33</sup> *Architect & Engineer*, March 1931, p. 135; “Health Center Building Will Cost...” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 26February1931,p. 6

<sup>34</sup> *Architect & Engineer*, January 1930, p.111

<sup>35</sup> Examiner News Clippings, Hospitals-Alemany, 12February1932: “Bonds Accepted By Contractors On Health Center.”

<sup>36</sup> “Four Hospitals Face Closing In Budget Cut,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 22May1932

<sup>37</sup> “More Snags in Hospital Building Plan,” Newspaper clipping. S.F. Bldgs. Hospitals. S.F. General.Clips. San Francisco Ephemera File, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library

<sup>38</sup> “Works Chief Opens Inquiry In Floor Row,” Newspaper clipping. S.F. Bldgs. Hospitals. S.F. General.Clips. San Francisco Ephemera File, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.

<sup>39</sup> “Hospitals Lack Funds to Care For Needy Sick,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 10January1933

<sup>40</sup> Examiner News Clippings, San Franciso-Health Centers-Alemany Health Center, “7 Doctors Added to Geiger’s Staff”, 6July1933, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library

<sup>41</sup> Examiner News Clippings, San Franciso-Health Centers-Alemany Health Center, “Wise Decision on Health Centers”, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library

<sup>42</sup> “Hospitals Lack Funds to Care For Needy Sick,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 10January1933

<sup>43</sup> “Mrs. Frank Eickhoff...” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 12May1933

<sup>44</sup> Examiner News Clippings, Hospitals-Alemany, 17August1933, “New Hospital Opening Set”; “Bonds Accepted By Contractors On Health Center”; “New Hospital For City”; “New Emergency Hospital Opened”; “7 Doctors Added To Geiger’s Staff,” San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library

<sup>45</sup> “Alemany Hospital Open Without Blare,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 17August1933

<sup>46</sup> “Hospitals To Keep Open With New \$37,142 Appropriation,” Newspaper clipping. S.F. Bldgs. Hospitals. S.F. General.Clips. San Francisco Ephemera File, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library

<sup>47</sup> “Hospitals to Keep Open With New \$37,142 Appropriation,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 8December1933

- <sup>48</sup> “Our National Hospital Emergency”, *The Saturday Evening Post*, 10August1935, p.22
- <sup>49</sup> “Hospital Service Has Busiest Year,” Newspaper clipping. S.F. Bldgs. Hospitals. S.F. General.Clips. San Francisco Ephemera File, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.
- <sup>50</sup> *San Francisco Ballot Propositions Database*, 1937. Government Information Center, San Francisco Public Library.
- <sup>51</sup> *San Francisco Ballot Propositions Database*, 1937. Government Information Center, San Francisco Public Library.
- <sup>52</sup> “Hospitals Get PWA Million,” Newspaper clipping. S.F. Bldgs. Hospitals. S.F. General.Clips. San Francisco Ephemera File, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.
- <sup>53</sup> “The Shocking Crime of Communism in State Relief,” *The Argonaut*, 19January1940, p.7
- <sup>54</sup> “22-Year Peak At City Hospital,” Newspaper clipping. S.F. Bldgs. Hospitals. S.F. General.Clips. San Francisco Ephemera File, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.
- <sup>55</sup> “Emergency Hospital Cases Rise,” Newspaper clipping. S.F. Bldgs. Hospitals. S.F. General.Clips. San Francisco Ephemera File, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.
- <sup>56</sup> “Earl Blake’s Boys”, *San Francisco Chronicle* ,11April1948, p.2
- <sup>57</sup> *Our History: Kaiser Permanente*: <http://share.kaiserpermanente.org/article/history-of-kaiser-permanente/>
- <sup>58</sup> “They Race Death Every Night” by Frank Cameron, *Saturday Evening Post*, 31January1953, p.28
- <sup>59</sup> Vertical File-Emergency Hospitals- “Compiled for the 1954 Convention of the American Medical Association”, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library
- <sup>60</sup> “They Race Death Every Night” by Frank Cameron, *Saturday Evening Post*, 3January1953, p. 28
- <sup>61</sup> *The History of The Surgical Service at San Francisco General Hospital* by William Schecter, Robert Lim, George Sheldon, Norman Christensen, William Blaisdell, 2007, p.53
- <sup>62</sup> Vertical File-Emergency Hospitals, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library
- <sup>63</sup> Bay Area Census, 1860-2000, [www.bayareacensus.ca.gov]
- <sup>64</sup> “Emergency Hospital Service”, *San Francisco City Employees Digest*, September 1963, p. 6,VF-SF Heath Dept.-Paramedics Division, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library
- <sup>65</sup> “Night Emergency”, VF-SF Heath Dept.-Paramedics Division, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library
- <sup>66</sup> *Catastrophes, Epidemics and Neglected Diseases* by F. William Blaisdell and Moses Grossman, The San Francisco General Hospital Foundation, 1999, p.140
- <sup>67</sup> “No Relief In S.F. for S.M. Injured”; “Seeks Alemany Services for North County,” *San Mateo Times*, 9July1962
- <sup>68</sup> *The History of The Surgical Service at San Francisco General Hospital* by William Schecter, Robert Lim, George Sheldon, Norman Christensen, William Blaisdell, 2007, p.52
- <sup>69</sup> Wikipedia article on 911: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/9-1-1>
- <sup>70</sup> Conversation with Joe Flanders, retired ambulance driver with the Emergency Hospital System, 28May2015. Today 1490 Mason Street is the location for the Chinese Public Health Center.
- <sup>71</sup> “New Emergency Hospital-Above Broadway Tunnel,” *San Francisco Examiner*, 25February1969, p.56. We do not know the source of the funding for this project.
- <sup>72</sup> Conversation with Joe Flanders, retired ambulance driver with the Emergency Hospital System, 28May2015
- <sup>73</sup> “City Charges for Emergency Care,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 29September 1969

- <sup>74</sup> "Emergency Medicine," *California Living Magazine*, 10February1974, VF-SF Health Dept.-Paramedics Division, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library
- <sup>75</sup> Examiner News Clippings, San Francisco-Health Centers-Alemany Health Center, "S.F. Hospital Protest Is Becoming a Stay-In", 14August1978, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library
- <sup>76</sup> "A Century of Caring," from *Emergency Medicine: The Next Hundred Years*, VH-SF-Health Dept.-Paramedic Division, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library
- <sup>77</sup> *The History of The Surgical Service at San Francisco General Hospital* by William Schecter, Robert Lim, George Sheldon, Norman Christensen, William Blaisdell, 2007, p.172
- <sup>78</sup> "The Remaking of SF's Ambulance Service," *San Francisco Today*, 3September1980, VF-SF Health Dept.-Paramedics Division, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library
- <sup>79</sup> Health Maintenance Organization Act of 1973, Wikipedia article
- <sup>80</sup> San Francisco General Hospital, Wikipedia article
- <sup>81</sup> *The Making of a San Francisco Landmark: The Park Emergency Hospital Building* by James Green, p. 6, circa 1993
- <sup>82</sup> San Francisco Department of Public Health Records Finding Aid, SFH 4, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library
- <sup>83</sup> *The Landmarks: The Very Old Hospital In Golden Gate Park* by Alex Bevk, 6January2014  
[http://sf.curbed.com/archives/2014/01/06/the\\_landmarks\\_the\\_very\\_old\\_hospital\\_in\\_golden\\_gate\\_park.php](http://sf.curbed.com/archives/2014/01/06/the_landmarks_the_very_old_hospital_in_golden_gate_park.php)
- <sup>84</sup> *The History of The Surgical Service at San Francisco General Hospital* by William Schecter, Robert Lim, George Sheldon, Norman Christensen, William Blaisdell, 2007, p.24
- <sup>85</sup> "S.F. Emergency Hospitals" by George Dusheck, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 17December1946
- <sup>86</sup> "The dark side of V-J Day - The story of the city's deadliest riot has been largely forgotten," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 15August2005, p. B1
- <sup>87</sup> "Commending Personnel of Emergency Hospital Service..." Unprocessed collection: Ambulance: Emergency Hospital and Paramedics, Health Dept.; San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library
- <sup>88</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*, 18November1936, p.36
- <sup>89</sup> "Hospital Plans Cut \$180,000," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 17March1932, p.4
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- <sup>91</sup> Conversation with Joe Flanders, retired ambulance driver with the Emergency Hospital System, 28May2015
- <sup>92</sup> Obituary, *San Francisco Examiner*, 10November1981, p. B7
- <sup>93</sup> Obituary, *San Francisco Examiner*, 10November1981, p. B7
- <sup>94</sup> Obituary, "Dr. J.C. Geiger," *San Francisco Examiner*, 10November1981, p. B7
- <sup>95</sup> "San Francisco Gadfly" by Dean Jennings, *Saturday Evening Post*, 7June1947, p.30
- <sup>96</sup> "San Francisco Gadfly," by Dean Jennings, *Saturday Evening Post*, 7June1947, p.30
- <sup>97</sup> "San Francisco Gadfly" by Dean Jennings, *Saturday Evening Post*, 7June1947, p.30
- <sup>98</sup> "Good Neighbor in Polka-Dots" by Jerry Flamm, *San Francisco-Call Bulletin*, 1956, VF-Biography File, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library
- <sup>99</sup> 1870 United States Federal Census, AncestryLibrary.com; *San Francisco Chronicle*, 22April1952, p.11, obituary; California Death Records 1940-1997, Rootsweb

- <sup>100</sup> *Architect & Engineer*, July 1938, p. 53; *San Francisco City Directory*, 1907, AncestryLibrary.com
- <sup>101</sup> Obituary, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 22April 1952, p.11
- <sup>102</sup> "Birthday Greetings," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 18November1936, p. 36
- <sup>103</sup> *San Francisco City Directory*, 1907, AncestryLibrary.com; 1910 United States Federal Census, AncestryLibrary.com
- <sup>104</sup> *San Francisco City Directory*, 1929, AncestryLibrary.com; 1940 United States Federal Census, AncestryLibrary.com
- <sup>105</sup> "Board Asked to Settle Dispute," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 4August1914, p.16
- <sup>106</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*, 19February1930, p. 24
- <sup>107</sup> "City Architect Will Sue For Salary Writ," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 28May1930, p.13
- <sup>108</sup> "Seven Take Oath Under New Charter," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 21April1931, p. 4
- <sup>109</sup> *San Francisco City Directory*, 1931, AncestryLibrary.com; *Architect & Engineer*, March 1931, p. 135
- <sup>110</sup> "Architect Sawyer Lays Lash on Education Board," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 22August 1934, p. 3
- <sup>111</sup> "Speed urged In Survey of City's Schools," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 25August1933, p.1
- <sup>112</sup> "City Refuses Contractors' Combine Bids," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 22January1936, p. 28
- <sup>113</sup> "Cleary Asking For Showdown On Contractors," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 5February1937, p. 3
- <sup>114</sup> "Bids to Be Called For New School," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 16August1934, p. 17; "S.F. Hospital Airport Work Plans Speeded," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 18November1937, p. 15
- <sup>115</sup> *Architect & Engineer of California*, November 1909, p. 94; *San Francisco Call*, 18October1909
- <sup>116</sup> "Architect At The State Convention," *Architect & Engineer*, November 1937, p.56
- <sup>117</sup> *Architect and Engineer*, July 1912; *Architect and Engineer of California*, November 1909, v.xix,#1; *Architecture and Allied Arts*, Spring 1931
- <sup>118</sup> Advertisement, 1January1936, *San Francisco Chronicle*, p. 28
- <sup>119</sup> "Temporary City Architect Appointed," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 2December1938, p. 7
- <sup>120</sup> "Veterans in City Service Retire," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 1December1938, p. 9
- <sup>121</sup> *San Francisco Public Schools. Report of the Superintendent*, 1931, p.31
- <sup>122</sup> *San Francisco Public Schools. Annual Report*, 1931, p. 51
- <sup>123</sup> *San Francisco Public Schools. Annual Report*, 1933-34
- <sup>124</sup> *San Francisco Public Schools. Annual Report*, 1933-34
- <sup>125</sup> William Kostura, Architectural Historian, personal research
- <sup>126</sup> *Building and Engineering News*, 23February1929, p.11
- <sup>127</sup> *Pacific Constructor*, 17August1935, p.17; *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map*, mid-1990s, San Francisco Property Information Map
- <sup>128</sup> Examiner News Clippings, San Francisco-Health Centers-Alemany Health Center, "City Hospitals Face Closing" 13July1943, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library
- <sup>129</sup> Examiner News Clippings, San Francisco-Health Centers-Alemany Health Center, "Maternity Classes Scheduled" 7January1959; "Pre-Natal Care Classes Set Here" 25April1955, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library

<sup>130</sup> Examiner News Clippings, San Francisco-Health Centers-Alemany Health Center, "Neighborhood Tries To Run a Closed Hospital" 17July1978, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library

<sup>131</sup> "A Century of Caring," from *Emergency Medicine: The Next Hundred Years*, VH-SF-Health Dept.-Paramedic Division, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library

<sup>132</sup> Examiner News Clippings, Hospitals. Alemany Hospital. "Angry Protesters Corner Health Director-Futilely" 13July1978; "Sit-inners Occupy Emergency Clinics Marked For Closing" 15July1978; "S.F. Hospital Protest Is Becoming a Stay-In" 15August1978, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library

<sup>133</sup> "Seven Booked In Beatings of Two Paramedics In SF", *Santa Ana Grange County Evening Register*, 3May1980, NewspaperARCHIVE Library Edition

<sup>134</sup> *Final Report, Survey For Asbestos-Containing Materials, Saint Mary's Hospital (Senior Activity Center) (CAM NO. 890) February 1996*, CCSF, Dept. of Public Health, p. 1 (1.1) ; *Art and Architecture-San Francisco* [website] by Cindy Casey, Letter from St. Mary's Medical Center/Adult Day Health Care to clients, 22August2011

<sup>135</sup> San Francisco Property Information Map, San Francisco Planning Department, CCSF

<sup>136</sup> Garavaglia Architecture, Inc. report on "35 Onondaga Street: HRE and Treatment Recommendations Report-Progress Report," 16April2012

<sup>137</sup> Anecdotes from conversations between the author and various neighbors, spring and summer of 2015.

<sup>138</sup> Wikipedia article on 911: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/9-1-1>

<sup>139</sup> Note regarding erroneous birthdate, see *Painting on the Left* by Anthony W. Lee, U. of California Press, 1999, p. 239

<sup>140</sup> Obituary, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 30November1985, p. 15 and *Finding Aid to Bernard Zakheim Papers*, Archives of American Art

<sup>141</sup> "Zakheim Exhibit to Open at Sonoma County Museum," *California Historical Courier*, Feb/March 1986, VF-Artist's File, Art, Music, & Recreation Dept. San Francisco Public Library

<sup>142</sup> "Something of His Own Soil," by M. Elizabeth Boone, *American Jewish History*, June 2002, p. 123

<sup>143</sup> *California Art Research*, First Series, Volume 20, Part 2, Abstract from WPA Project 2874, O.P. 65-3-3632, 1937, p.47 and *San Francisco Chronicle*, 23May1931 [19May1931, girl]

<sup>144</sup> *California Art Research*, First Series, Volume 20, Part 2, Abstract from WPA Project 2874, O.P. 65-3-3632, 1937, p.49

<sup>145</sup> *California Art Research*, First Series, Volume 20, Part 2, Abstract from WPA Project 2874, O.P. 65-3-3632, 1937, p.53

<sup>146</sup> *California Art Research*, First Series, Volume 20, Part 2, Abstract from WPA Project 2874, O.P. 65-3-3632, 1937, p.54

<sup>147</sup> *California Art Research*, First Series, Volume 20, Part 2, Abstract from WPA Project 2874, O.P. 65-3-3632, 1937, p.50

<sup>148</sup> *California Art Research*, First Series, Volume 20, Part 2, Abstract from WPA Project 2874, O.P. 65-3-3632, 1937, p.52-3

<sup>149</sup> We do not have specific dates for Zakheim's visit to Mexico, only that he returned to San Francisco by June 1931. There is no evidence that Zakheim learned the art of fresco from Rivera only that he "studied" with him. In 1926, "students and teachers were flocking to the shrine of Diego Rivera" in Mexico ("Artists Carve Own Frames," *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 28, 1926, p. 34.) It is unlikely, since he was no longer affiliated with the California School of Fine Arts (San Francisco Art Institute) that he would have been part of the contingent which visited the famous Rivera in Mexico in the late 1920s. Possibly their visit inspired Zakheim's trip to Mexico. Timothy Pflueger brought Rivera to San Francisco to paint a mural at The City Club in 1931. It is unlikely that Zakheim would have been included in this project, either socially or officially. It is possible that Zakheim would have spent time with Rivera while he was in San Francisco but this has not been documented.

<sup>150</sup> *California Art Research*, First Series, Volume 20, Part 2, Abstract from WPA Project 2874, O.P. 65-3-3632, 1937, p.56. This source suggests that Zakheim learned how to create frescoes and created his first fresco under the guidance of Gebauer.

<sup>151</sup> *California Art Research*, First Series, Volume 20, Part 2, Abstract from WPA Project 2874, O.P. 65-3-3632, 1937, p.57

<sup>152</sup> "Remind the World" by Walter Blum, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 8December1968

- <sup>153</sup> "Memorial to the Six Million-Zakheim Warsaw Ghetto Memorial Monument," Mount Sinai Memorial Park pamphlet, VF-Biography, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library
- <sup>154</sup> "Something of His Own Soil," by M. Elizabeth Boone, *American Jewish History*, June 2002, p. 123
- <sup>155</sup> "Something of His Own Soil," by M. Elizabeth Boone, *American Jewish History*, June 2002, p. 123
- <sup>156</sup> Examiner Newspaper Clippings-Zakheim, Bernard Baruch. Artist. "Vivid Fresco By Zakheim Attracts" 12November 1938, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library
- <sup>157</sup> "Something of His Own Soil," by M. Elizabeth Boone, *American Jewish History*, June 2002, p. 123
- <sup>158</sup> The first frescoes to be painted in San Francisco were probably done by Domenico Tojetti in the 1880s, *Painting on the Left* by Anthony W. Lee, U. of California Press, 1999, p. 246
- <sup>159</sup> Examiner Newspaper Clippings- Zakheim, Bernard Baruch. "Vivid Fresco By Zakheim Attracts" 12November 1938, Artist. San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library
- <sup>160</sup> "Bernard Baruch Zakheim: A Testimony About His Art," by Terry St. John, VF-Artist's File, Art, Music, & Recreation Dept. San Francisco Public Library
- <sup>161</sup> *New Deal Art, California*, De Saisset Art Gallery and Museum, University of Santa Clara, c1976, p. 72
- <sup>162</sup> *New Deal Art, California*, De Saisset Art Gallery and Museum, University of Santa Clara, c1976, p. 69
- <sup>163</sup> Twenty-six artists are reported in *Painting on the Left* by Anthony W. Lee, U. of California Press, 1999 p. 246.
- <sup>164</sup> Examiner Newspaper Clippings, Zakheim, Bernard Baruch. Artist. "The Murals in Coit Tower," by Masha Zakheim Jewett, 14December1975, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library
- <sup>165</sup> *New Deal Art, California*, De Saisset Art Gallery and Museum, University of Santa Clara, c1976, p. 72
- <sup>166</sup> *New Deal Art, California*, De Saisset Art Gallery and Museum, University of Santa Clara, c1976, p. 75
- <sup>167</sup> "Something of His Own Soil," by M. Elizabeth Boone, *American Jewish History*, June 2002, p. 123
- <sup>168</sup> Examiner Newspaper Clippings, Zakheim, Bernard Baruch. Artist. "The Murals in Coit Tower," by Masha Zakheim Jewett, 14December1975, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library
- <sup>169</sup> *Cosmopolitans* by Fred Rosenbaum, U. of California Press, 2009, p. 277.
- <sup>170</sup> *California Art Research*, First Series, Volume 20, Part 2, Abstract from WPA Project 2874, O.P. 65-3-3632, 1937, p.69
- <sup>171</sup> *Painting on the Left* by Anthony W. Lee, U. of California Press, 1999, p. 154
- <sup>172</sup> *Painting on the Left* by Anthony W. Lee, U. of California Press, 1999, p. 97
- <sup>173</sup> *Cosmopolitans* by Fred Rosenbaum, U. of California Press, 2009, p. 288.
- <sup>174</sup> *History of Medicine in California Articulated in Frescoes* by Robert S. Sherins, in celebration of the UCSF, School of Medicine Sesquicentennial, [2014]
- <sup>175</sup> Zakheim and Eda (Ida) divorced in 1937, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 1Oct1937, p. 13; Zakheim married Phyllis Wrightson in 1940, *Guide to the Collection of Bernard Zakheim*, MSS 2014.15, U. of California, San Francisco, Archives and Special Collections
- <sup>176</sup> We believe that Wrightson misspeaks here by referring to the "Growth" mural as "Birth." "Growth" is described and referred to in *California Art Research*, First Series, Volume 20, Part 2, 1937, p.81, just one paragraph above Wrightson's quote. It is also referred to a "Growth" in the later document, *A Survey of Art Work* by Martin Snipper, Art Commission, CCSF, 1953, #325. Perhaps Zakheim and Wrightson disagreed on the title? That remains a mystery. Just as the mural itself is a mystery since it remains covered and we have yet to locate photographs of it.
- <sup>177</sup> *California Art Research*, First Series, Volume 20, Part 2, Abstract from WPA Project 2874, O.P. 65-3-3632, 1937, p.81-82
- <sup>178</sup> News clipping, Bernard Zakheim collection, 1902-2010 (bulk 1935-1990), MSS, 2014-15, UCSF Library.



<sup>179</sup> *This Week: Zakheim: The Art of Prophetic Justice*, KQED video, 2010, [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vmMqg5w5-fo>]

<sup>180</sup> *Brought To Light, Recent Acquisition: Bernard Zakheim Collection*, UCSF blog, 24February2015

<sup>181</sup> Examiner Newspaper Clippings, Zakheim, Bernard Baruch. Artist. "U.C. Medical School Mural is Covered," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 5January1948, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library

<sup>182</sup> Examiner Newspaper Clippings, Zakheim, Bernard Baruch. Artist. "Art From Under the Wallpaper" 20November1962, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library

<sup>183</sup> *Voice of Federation*, 10September1936 and 19November1936, Labor Archives and Research Center, San Francisco State University

<sup>184</sup> *California Art Research*, First Series, Volume 20, Part 2, Abstract from WPA Project 2874, O.P. 65-3-3632, 1937, p.109

<sup>185</sup> *Mount Sinai Memorial Park*, pamphlet, VF-Biography, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library

<sup>186</sup> Examiner Newspaper Clippings, Zakheim, Bernard Baruch. Artist. "Artist Finds Room for a Fresco on an Empty Wall in Poland, 5August1962, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library

<sup>187</sup> "In The Galleries," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 4March1973, p. 43, VF-Artist's File, Art, Music, & Recreation Dept. San Francisco Public Library

<sup>188</sup> Obituary, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 30November1985, p.15

<sup>189</sup> "Zakheim Exhibit to Open at Sonoma County Museum," *California Historical Courier*, Feb/March 1986, VF-Artist's File, Art, Music, & Recreation Dept. San Francisco Public Library

<sup>190</sup> "Zakheim Exhibit to Open at Sonoma County Museum," *California Historical Courier*, Feb/March 1986, VF-Artist's File, Art, Music, & Recreation Dept. San Francisco Public Library

<sup>191</sup> "Race to Beat Wrecking Ball," by Steve Rubenstein, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 2November2001, p. A21



# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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March 22, 2016

Ms. Angela Calvillo, Clerk  
Supervisor Avalos  
Board of Supervisors  
City and County of San Francisco  
City Hall, Room 244  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
San Francisco, CA 94102

1650 Mission St.  
Suite 400  
San Francisco,  
CA 94103-2479

Reception:  
**415.558.6378**

Fax:  
**415.558.6409**

Planning  
Information:  
**415.558.6377**

**Re: Transmittal of Planning Department Case Number 2015-003877DES:  
35-45 Onondaga Landmark Designation (Alemany Emergency Hospital and  
Health Center)  
BOS File No: \_\_\_\_\_ (pending)  
Historic Preservation Commission Recommendation: Approval**

Dear Ms. Calvillo and Supervisor Avalos,

On March 16, 2016 the San Francisco Historic Preservation Commission (hereinafter "HPC") conducted a duly noticed public hearing at a regularly scheduled meeting to consider a recommendation for landmark designation of 35-45 Onondaga Avenue, known historically as the Alemany Emergency Hospital and Health Center, to the Board of Supervisors. At the hearing, the HPC voted to approve a resolution to recommend landmark designation pursuant to Article 10 of the Planning Code.

The proposed amendments have been determined to be categorically exempt from environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act Section 15060(c)(2).

Supervisor Avalos, it is my understanding that you intend to sponsor the proposed Ordinance. Please contact the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors at your earliest convenience.

Please find attached documents relating to the HPC's action. The original redlined version and two copies of the ordinance will be delivered to the Clerk's office shortly. If you have any questions or require further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Aaron D. Starr".

Aaron D. Starr  
Manager of Legislative Affairs

cc: Beth Rubenstein, Aide to Supervisor Avalos  
Alisa Somera, Office of the Clerk of the Board

[www.sfplanning.org](http://www.sfplanning.org)

Andrea Ruiz-Esquide, City Attorney's Office  
John Carroll, Legislative Clerk, Office of the Clerk of the Board

Attachments (one copy of the following):

Draft Article 10 Landmark Designation Ordinance  
Historic Preservation Commission Resolution No. 752  
Planning Department Memo dated March 16, 2016  
Historic Preservation Commission Resolution No. 758  
Planning Department Case Report dated February 17, 2016  
Exhibits  
Landmark Designation Fact Sheet  
Community Support Letters  
Community Sponsored Landmark Designation Application



# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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**HEARING DATE:** March 16, 2016  
**CASE NUMBERS:** 2015-003877DES – 35-45 Onondaga Avenue  
**TO:** Historic Preservation Commission  
**FROM:** Shannon Ferguson  
Preservation Planner, 415-575-9074  
**REVIEWED BY:** Tim Frye  
Preservation Coordinator, 415-575-6822  
**RE:** Landmark Recommendation Resolution

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Dear President Wolfram and Members of the Commission:

On February 17, 2016, the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) approved with conditions Resolution No. 758 to initiate Article 10 landmark designation of 35-45 Onondaga Avenue, known historically as the Alemany Emergency Hospital and Health Center. Please note the character defining features listed in the Designation Ordinance have been amended to include the skylights and their relationship to the space below.

Under Article 10, initiation and recommendation are two distinct steps of the landmark designation process which require separate hearings and resolutions. Attached is a draft Resolution to recommend approval to the Board of Supervisors the designation of 35-45 Onondaga Avenue, the Alemany Emergency Hospital and Health Center, as a San Francisco landmark under Article 10 of the Planning Code, Section 1004.1. The Planning Department (Department) recommends adopting this Resolution.

## **ATTACHMENTS:**

Draft Resolution  
February 17, 2016 Case Report  
Landmark Designation Fact Sheet  
Exhibits  
Community Support Letters  
Community Sponsored Landmark Designation Application  
Designation Ordinance  
Resolution 758





# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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## Landmark Designation Case Report

*Hearing Date:* February 17, 2016  
*Case No.:* 2015-003877DES  
*Project Address:* 35-45 Onondaga Avenue  
*Zoning:* NCD – Excelsior Outer Mission Street Neighborhood  
Commercial and P - Public  
*Block/Lots:* 6956/016, 017  
*Property Owner:* City and County of San Francisco  
25 Van Ness Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94102  
*Staff Contact:* Shannon Ferguson – (415) 575-9074  
[shannon.ferguson@sfgov.org](mailto:shannon.ferguson@sfgov.org)  
*Reviewed By:* Tim Frye – (415) 575-6822  
[tim.frye@sfgov.org](mailto:tim.frye@sfgov.org)

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### PROPERTY DESCRIPTIONS & SURROUNDING LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

35-45 Onondaga Avenue, historically known as the Alemany Emergency Hospital and Health Center is located at the southeast corner of Onondaga Avenue and Alemany Boulevard. The former Emergency Hospital (35 Onondaga Avenue) is a one-story reinforced concrete and brick institutional building designed with Spanish Baroque influences, while the former Health Center (45 Onondaga Avenue) is a one- to two-story wood frame institutional building designed with Spanish Colonial Revival influences. Both buildings were designed by City Architect, Charles H. Sawyer, and constructed in 1933. The attached Application for Historic Landmark Designation, prepared by members of the New Mission Terrace Improvement Association, contains detailed building descriptions on pages 12-22.

The subject property is located in San Francisco's Excelsior / Outer Mission neighborhood. The immediate vicinity is largely characterized by one-story-over-raised-basement single-family residences along Alemany Boulevard, and by one- to four-story commercial and mixed use buildings along Mission Street. Several institutional properties are also present in the immediate vicinity, including a U.S. Post Office at 15 Onondaga Avenue, the Pacific Telephone & Telegraph Company's Randolph Office at 1875 Alemany Boulevard, and the Croatian American Cultural Center at 60 Onondaga Avenue. Balboa High School (City Landmark No. 205) is located a block away at the southwest corner of Onondaga Avenue and Cayuga Avenue.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The case before the Historic Preservation Commission is consideration of a community-sponsored Article 10 Landmark Application and consideration to Initiate Landmark Designation of the former Alemany

Emergency Hospital and Health Center as a San Francisco landmark under Article 10 of the Planning Code, Section 1004.1.

## ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW STATUS

The Planning Department has determined that actions by regulatory agencies for protection of the environment (specifically in this case, landmark designation) are exempt from environmental review, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15308 (Class Eight - Categorical).

## GENERAL PLAN POLICIES

The Urban Design Element of the San Francisco General Plan contains the following relevant objectives and policies:

- OBJECTIVE 2: Conservation of Resources that provide a sense of nature, continuity with the past, and freedom from overcrowding.
- POLICY 4: Preserve notable landmarks and areas of historic, architectural or aesthetic value, and promote the preservation of other buildings and features that provide continuity with past development.

Designating significant historic resources as local landmarks will further continuity with the past because the buildings will be preserved for the benefit of future generations. Landmark designation will require that the Planning Department and the Historic Preservation Commission review proposed work that may have an impact on character-defining features. Both entities will utilize the Secretary of Interior's *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* in their review to ensure that only appropriate, compatible alterations are made.

## SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING CODE SECTION 101.1 – GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY AND IMPLEMENTATION

Planning Code Section 101.1 – Eight Priority Policies establishes and requires review of permits for consistency with said policies. On balance, the proposed designation is consistent with the priority policies in that:

- a. The proposed designation will further Priority Policy No. 7, that landmarks and historic buildings be preserved. Landmark designation of 35-45 Onondaga Avenue will help to preserve important historical resources that are significant for their association with community healthcare; and designed by City Architect Charles H. Sawyer, are architecturally significant as examples of a type and period, and for conveying high artistic values; and finally for interior frescoes by noted artist Bernard Zakehim.

## BACKGROUND / PREVIOUS ACTIONS

Following the submittal of a draft community-sponsored Application for Historic Landmark Designation, 35-45 Onondaga Avenue was added to the Landmark Designation Work Program during the Historic Preservation Commission's regularly-scheduled hearing on May 20, 2015.

## OTHER ACTIONS REQUIRED

If the Historic Preservation Commission decides to initiate designation of the subject property as an Article 10 landmark, the item will be considered again by the Historic Preservation Commission at a subsequent hearing. At that time the Historic Preservation Commission may adopt a resolution recommending that the Board of Supervisors support the designation. The nomination would then be considered at a future Board of Supervisors hearing for formal Article 10 landmark designation.

## APPLICABLE PRESERVATION STANDARDS

### ARTICLE 10

Section 1004 of the Planning Code authorizes the landmark designation of an individual structure or other feature or an integrated group of structures and features on a single lot or site, having special character or special historical, architectural or aesthetic interest or value, as a landmark. Section 1004.1 also outlines that landmark designation may be initiated by the Board of Supervisors or the Historic Preservation Commission and the initiation shall include findings in support. Section 1004.2 states that once initiated, the proposed designation is referred to the Historic Preservation Commission for a report and recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to approve, disapprove or modify the proposal.

Pursuant to Section 1004.3 of the Planning Code, if the Historic Preservation Commission approves the designation, a copy of the resolution of approval is transmitted to the Board of Supervisors and without referral to the Planning Commission. The Board of Supervisors shall hold a public hearing on the designation and may approve, modify or disapprove the designation.

In the case of the initiation of a historic district, the Historic Preservation Commission shall refer its recommendation to the Planning Commission pursuant to Section 1004.2(c). The Planning Commission shall have 45 days to provide review and comment on the proposed designation and address the consistency of the proposed designation with the General Plan, Section 101.1 priority policies, the City's Regional Housing Needs Allocation, and the Sustainable Communities Strategy for the Bay Area. These comments shall be sent to the Board of Supervisors in the form of a resolution.

Section 1004(b) requires that the designating ordinance approved by the Board of Supervisors shall include the location and boundaries of the landmark site, a description of the characteristics of the landmark which justify its designation, and a description of the particular features that should be preserved.

Section 1004.4 states that if the Historic Preservation Commission disapproves the proposed designation, such action shall be final, except upon the filing of a valid appeal to the Board of Supervisors within 30 days.

### ARTICLE 10 LANDMARK CRITERIA

The Historic Preservation Commission on February 4, 2009, by Resolution No. 001, adopted the National Register Criteria as its methodology for recommending landmark designation of historic resources. Under the National Register Criteria, the quality of significance in American history, architecture,



archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, materials, workmanship, and association, and that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or properties that have yielded, or may likely yield, information important in prehistory or history.

## PUBLIC / NEIGHBORHOOD INPUT

There is no known public or neighborhood opposition to designation of 35-45 Onondaga Avenue as an Article 10 landmark. The Department received a letter dated May 12, 2015 from the New Mission Terrace Improvement Association stating their support for efforts to landmark 35-45 Onondaga Avenue. The Department will provide any public correspondence received after the submittal of this report in the Historic Preservation Commission's correspondence folder.

## PROPERTY OWNER INPUT

The Planning Department has shared the designation report with the Real Estate Department and informed them of possible landmark initiation.

## STAFF ANALYSIS

The case report and analysis under review was prepared by Department preservation staff. The Department has determined 35-45 Onondaga Avenue meets the requirements for Article 10 eligibility as an individual landmark. The justification inclusion is outlined below under the Significance and Integrity sections of this case report.

### SIGNIFICANCE

35-45 Onondaga Avenue appears eligible for local designation due to its association with the expansion of community healthcare during the depths of the Great Depression. As described in the Application for Historic Landmark Designation:

Funded by a 1928 public bond measure and built in 1933, they [these buildings] extended the City's emergency hospital system to cover a growing and underserved part of town which today remains predominately populated with modest, single-family homes in a district with few architecturally significant buildings. These buildings were the final piece of the citywide emergency hospital system to be built. It was a system which was once nationally known and respected. The buildings are remnants of a noble, and once controversial, effort to provide free and efficient emergency health care to the district.

According to the Application for Historic Landmark Designation, the Emergency Hospital and Health Center operated until 1978, when San Francisco's Emergency Hospital System was discontinued. In response, Excelsior neighborhood residents demonstrated against the closure for more than a month. A more in-depth discussion of the buildings' use is included in the attached Application for Historic Landmark Designation on pages 23-34.

The buildings at 35-45 Onondaga Avenue also appear eligible for local designation for embodying the distinctive characteristics of a type and period, and for conveying high artistic values. Designed by City Architect, Charles H. Sawyer, the buildings both demonstrate the influences of Spanish Revival style architecture, which was widely popular for institutional designs from the 1920s through the 1950s. A fuller discussion of Sawyer's career is included in the attached Application for Historic Landmark Designation on pages 35-40.

The former Alemany Health Center building at 45 Onondaga Avenue also contains two significant interior murals, "Birth" and "Community Spirit," painted in 1934 by the noted artist, Bernard Zakheim. These murals are located on the fireplace chimney at were funded by the State Emergency Relief Administration. The mural entitled "Birth," located on the lower half of the chimney, has been largely painted over but is considered a good candidate for restoration. Zakheim's work in San Francisco also included notable murals for the San Francisco Jewish Community Center (1933); Coit Tower (1934); and at the University of California San Francisco's Cole Hall (1935-1936) and Toland Hall (1938). A broader exploration of Zakheim's career is included in the attached Application for Historic Landmark Designation on pages 44-56.

#### INTEGRITY

The buildings seen relatively few alterations since their construction and retain more than sufficient integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, and feeling to convey association with their original design and use. The principal alterations to the Alemany Emergency Hospital at 35 Onondaga Avenue include the removal of the original paired wooden vehicle doors forming the ambulance entrance and the interior remodeling of the ambulance bay. Principal alterations to the Alemany Health Center at 45 Onondaga Avenue include the installation of an accessible entrance ramp and the removal of four metal balconettes at the second story windows.

#### CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES

Whenever a building, site, object, or landscape is under consideration for Article 10 landmark designation, the Historic Preservation Commission is required to identify character-defining features of the property. This is done to enable owners and the public to understand which elements are considered most important to preserve the historical and architectural character of the proposed landmark.

As identified by Planning Department staff, the character-defining features of the buildings include the following:

**35 Onondaga / Alemany Emergency Hospital**

*Exterior Features Character-Defining Features*

- All exterior elevations, architectural ornament and roofline
- Four bay composition consisting of three symmetrical arched bays toward the west and an arched bay with a lower roofline toward the east.
- Brick cladding consisting principally of red-colored stretchers alternating with darker-colored headers.
- Cream-colored terra cotta cladding and ornament, including bands of profiled terra cotta outlining the arched bays and entry, terra cotta ornament within the tympanums of the arched window bays featuring scrolls topped by urns and crosses, and terra cotta beltcourses featuring pairs of colonettes topped by finials
- Central entry featuring a pair of partially-glazed and paneled wood doors with an elaborate cream-colored terra cotta surround featuring flanking colonettes and a floriated frieze with a central cartouche. This composition is crowned by scrolling ornament, candles, and a plaque reading "Alemany Emergency Hospital," surmounted by an entablature and a shield with a cross at center.
- Metal and glass light fixture hanging from the center of the entry arch.
- Arched bay to the west (former ambulance entrance) featuring terra cotta cladding and a wood frame opening, surrounded by rusticated terra cotta cladding.
- Roofline featuring two courses of brick turned at a 45-degree angle to create a zig-zag effect, crowned by a parapet covered with red clay tiles.
- Double-hung wood windows with shouldered surrounds.
- Wire-glass skylights (some screened with non-historic materials on the interior).

*Interior Character-Defining Features*

- Entry vestibule featuring tan-colored wall tiles with blue-colored tile borders, blind arches and a vaulted ceiling.
- Cream-colored tile wainscot with tan-colored tile border. In many areas the tile appears to be covered with textured wallpaper, which is not character-defining.
- Wood doors with wooden transoms, including tan-colored tile work outlining the door and transom openings (see attached plan).
- Blue-colored wall tile used within various examination rooms (see attached plan).
- Two large open rooms toward the west end of the building (see attached plan).
- Staircase to basement featuring cream-colored tile with tan-colored border.

**45 Onondaga / Alemany Health Center**

*Exterior Features Character-Defining Features*

- All exterior elevations, architectural ornament and roofline.
- Combination hip and gable roof clad with Spanish Clay tiles.
- Irregular massing with a one-story wing fronting Onondaga Avenue connecting to a two-story wing toward the rear.
- Rounded tower at the intersection of the one- and two-story wings featuring an arched entry niche flanked by grid niches and metal and glass lights, a punched window opening, and a roofline featuring zig-zag stucco relief, pipe vents and a conical roof clad with Spanish clay tiles.
- Courtyard featuring rounded stucco walls, a decorative iron gate with shield ornament, iron fencing, and a curving seat bench on the interior.
- Double-hung wood windows with ogee lugs.
- Gabled wing facing Onondaga Avenue featuring a pointed arch tripartite window with wood sashes and turned wood mullions, as well as clay pipe vents beneath the gable end.
- Tripartite vents on upper facade of one-story wing facing Onondaga Avenue.
- Secondary entry facing Alemany Boulevard featuring a recessed vestibule with wood door and transom.
- Brick chimneys.
- Copper rain gutters (portions missing).

*Interior Character-Defining Features*

- Lobby with double-height volume, gable ceiling with wood beams, and vertical board wainscot with flat board trim.
- Central fireplace featuring tile cladding with a floral tile accent, wooden brackets with carved floriated ornament and Fleur-des-lis supporting a wood mantle, and a tapered plaster chimney rising through a wood balcony with a decorative iron railing at the second floor.
- Bernard Zakheim frescoes on the fireplace chimney (one on each floor); the mural on the first floor is partially painted over.
- Metal candle sconces flanking the fireplace.
- Wood staircase with turned wood balusters and vertical board wainscot.
- Gabled ceiling at second floor landing of staircase.
- Doorways flanking the fireplace on the first floor and arched doorways flanking the chimney on the second floor.
- Metal railing in punched window opening at second story of rounded tower.

## BOUNDARIES OF THE LANDMARK SITE

The proposed landmark site encompasses Assessor's Block 6956, Lots 016 and 017 – on which the subject buildings are located.

## PLANNING DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION

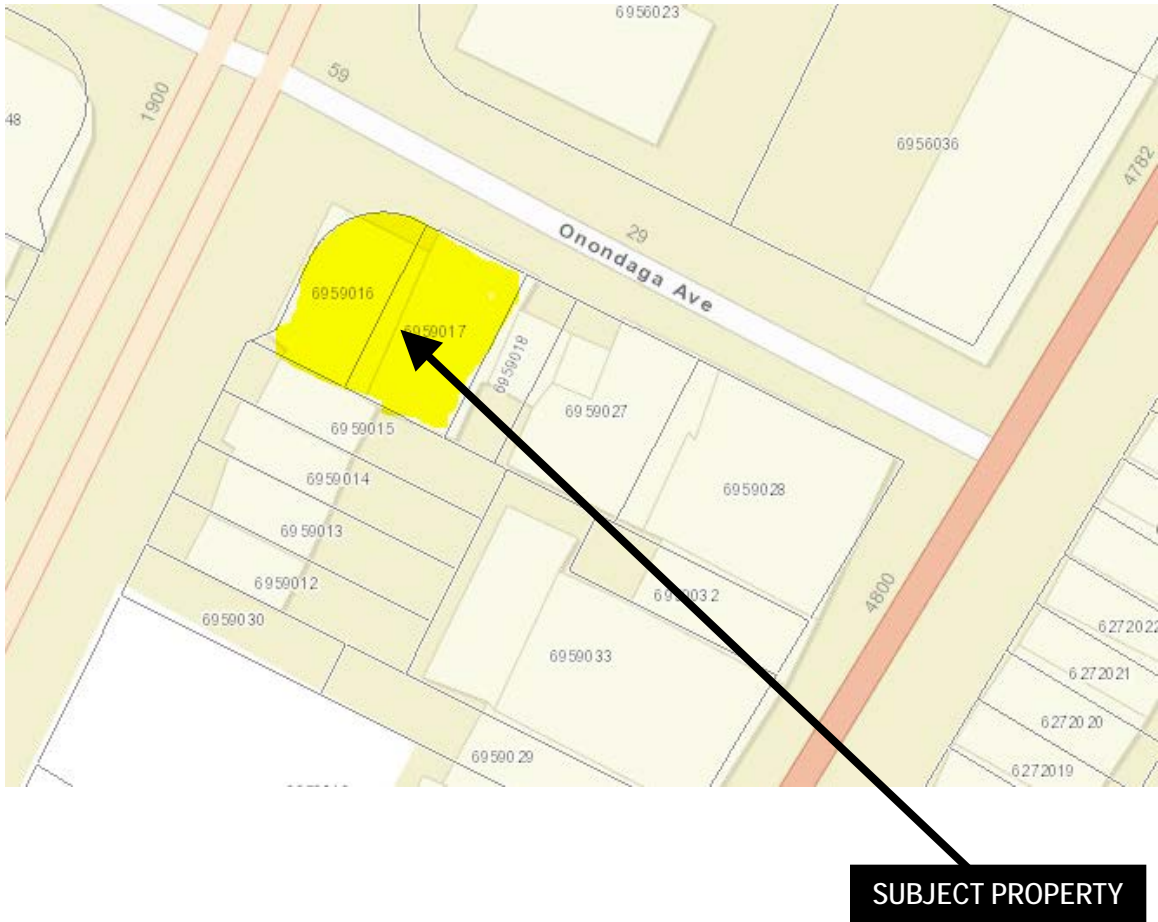
Based on the Department's analysis, 35-45 Onondaga is eligible for Article 10 Landmark designation for its association with community healthcare, as well as significant architectural expressions and examples of a type and period, and for conveying high artistic values. The Department recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission initiate Article 10 Landmark designation of 35-45 Onondaga Avenue.

Under Article 10, The Historic Preservation Commission may recommend approval, disapproval or approval with modifications of the proposed initiation of 35-45 Onondaga Avenue as San Francisco landmarks. If the Historic Preservation Commission approves initiation, a second hearing will be held to consider whether or not to recommend landmark designation to the Board of Supervisors. A copy of the motion of recommendation is then transmitted to the Board of Supervisors, which will hold a public hearing on the designation and may approve, modify or disapprove the designation (Section 1004.4). If the Historic Preservation Commission disapproves the proposed designation, such action shall be final, except upon the filing of a valid appeal to the Board of Supervisors within 30 days (Section 1004.5).

## ATTACHMENTS

- A. Community Sponsored Article 10 Landmark Application
- B. Draft Resolution initiating designation
- C. Draft landmark ordinance

# Parcel Map

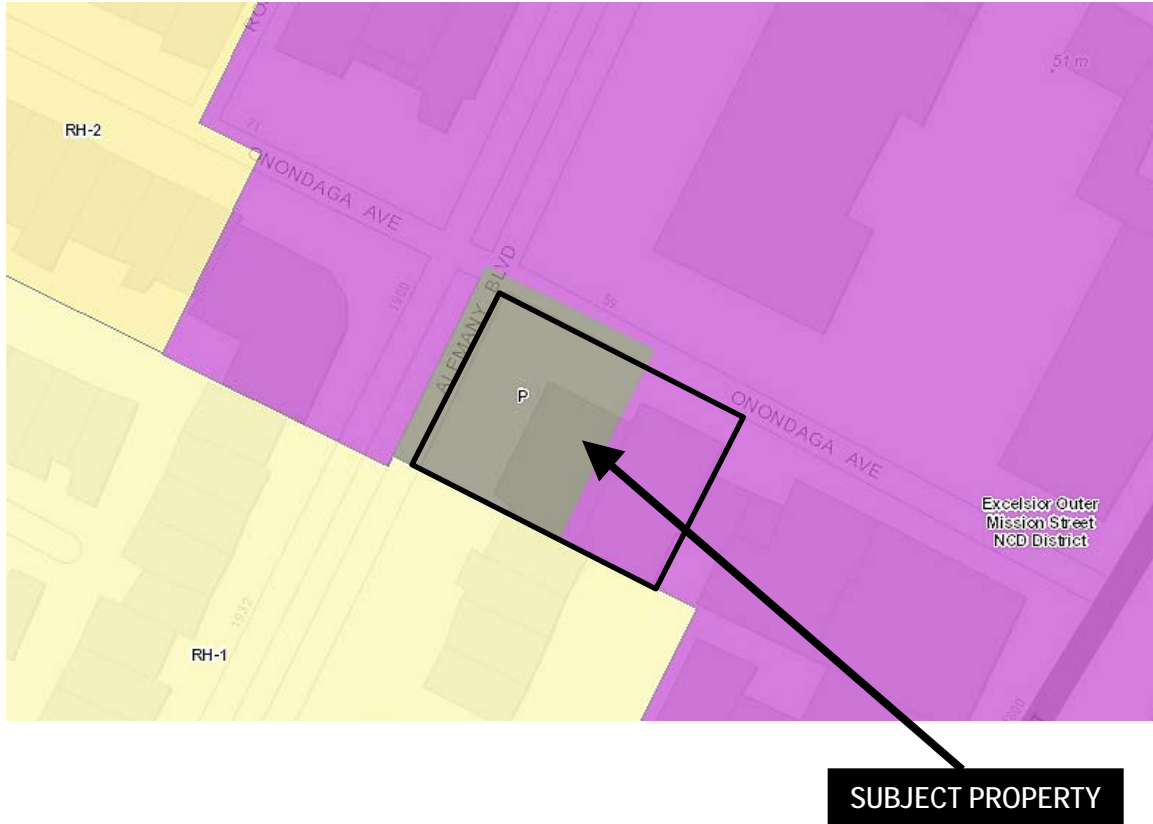


**SUBJECT PROPERTY**



Consideration for Initiation of Article 10  
Landmark Designation  
35-45 Onondaga Avenue  
Case Number 2015-003877DES

# Zoning Map



# Aerial Photo

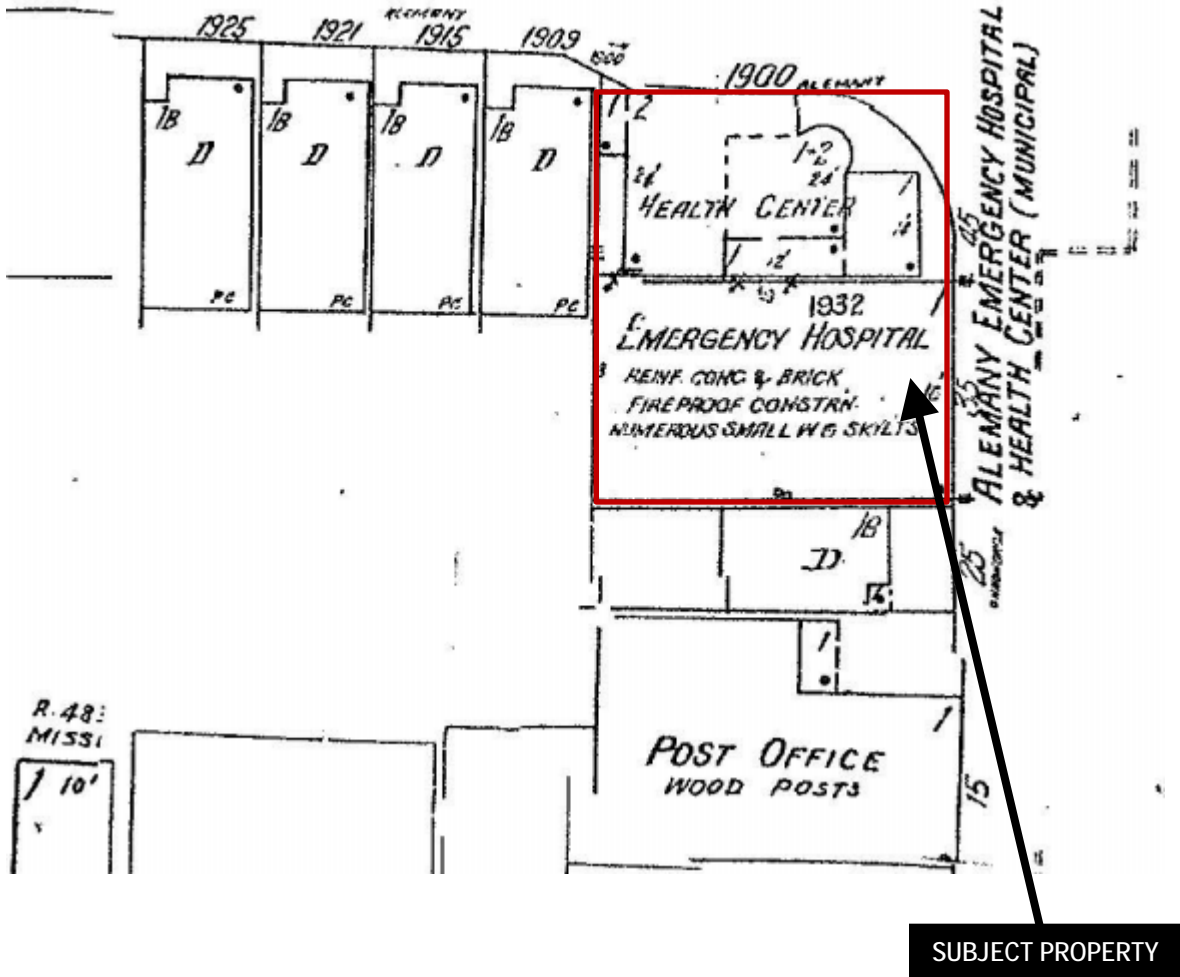


SUBJECT PROPERTY





# Sanborn Map\*



\*The Sanborn Maps in San Francisco have not been updated since 1998, and this map may not accurately reflect existing conditions.



# Site Photos



Consideration for Initiation of Article 10  
Landmark Designation  
35-45 Onondaga Avenue  
Case Number 2015-003877DES

Member, Board of Supervisors  
District 11



City and County of San Francisco

JOHN AVALOS

February 10, 2016

San Francisco Historic Preservation Committee  
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400  
San Francisco, CA 94103

RE: 35-45 Onondaga Avenue: Alemany Emergency Hospital & Health Center Buildings and the Bernard  
Zakheim murals

President Wolfram and Commissioners:

I am writing to support the landmark status for the buildings at 35-45 Onondaga. Awarding landmark status would ensure the preservation of key aspects of these important District 11 public buildings.

My office is working closely with the City of San Francisco Real Estate Division, the Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development and the Northern California Community Loan Fund to develop plans to renovate these buildings so that they again will be community assets for our Excelsior neighborhood. Landmark status complements this movement to reactivate the buildings.

As you know, these buildings hold important neighborhood history as well as City history. Funded by a 1928 public bond measure, 35-45 Onondaga was built in 1933 and designed by City Architect Charles H. Sawyer as part of a nationally-renown neighborhood health system: 35 Onondaga served as a neighborhood emergency hospital and 45 Onondaga was the community health center. The health center has District 11's only historic mural: on the grand fireplace in its main space Bernard Zackheim, a WPA artist who painted some of the Coit Tower murals, created a mural depicting the Excelsior – including a view of our classic homes, Balboa High School and the top of the Mount Davidson cross.

In addition, 35-45 Onondaga was the site of an important neighborhood protest and social activism. In the summer of 1978, the threatened closure of the Emergency Healthcare System galvanized the neighbors to organize a protest against the loss of free healthcare services to working class residents. COMO (Communities of the Outer Mission Organization) was one of the groups that led the protest and organized the occupation of 35-45 Onondaga for one and half months. During the protest, COMO continued to offer free first aid and emergency services to nearby residents. Though the System was subsequently closed, these buildings have continued to house low-cost and free health services for the community until about 10 years ago.

We are grateful to a group of determined and visionary neighbors who have worked closely with the Planning Department to do the research and writing for this landmark application.

I urge you to approve this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Avalos".

JOHN AVALOS  
Supervisor, District 11

**From:** [w.kostura](mailto:w.kostura)  
**To:** [andrew@tefarch.com](mailto:andrew@tefarch.com); [Secretary, Commissions \(CPC\)](#); [Ferguson, Shannon \(CPC\)](#); [Lisa Dunseth](#)  
**Subject:** Alemany Emergency Hospital & Health Center buildings  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 09, 2016 1:17:22 PM

---

To: Andrew Wolfram, President  
Historic Preservation Commission

From: William Kostura, architectural historian

Dear Mr Wolfram and HPC Commissioners

I am writing in support of Landmark status for the Alemany Emergency Hospital and Health Center buildings at 35-45 Onondaga Street. My reasons are:

- \* The Excelsior and Outer Mission districts are blue-collar neighborhoods and developed relatively late compared to more northern San Francisco neighborhoods. As a consequence of these factors, landmark-quality buildings there are fewer in number than in many other parts of San Francisco, and are somewhat scattered. Those that exist are all the more precious for this reason. The Alemany Emergency Hospital and Health Center buildings are such buildings. Their loss would have a very harmful effect on the historic fabric and texture of the neighborhood.
- \* The Emergency Hospital at 35 Onondaga is extraordinarily rich in its brickwork and terra cotta ornament. It gives welcome texture to this little corner of the neighborhood, and without it the neighborhood would be impoverished. I cannot understand why no one builds like this any longer, but since they do not, let us honor and preserve buildings from the time when beauty in architecture was the accepted standard.
- \* These were institutional buildings built by the city to serve public health. Imagine that. We should preserve these buildings as a reminder of what is possible in city government.
- \* The facade materials of the Emergency Hospital need cleaning, and the buildings need occupants and to be used. Landmark status would help to ensure that this is done in a sensitive manner.

Sincerely,  
William Kostura

former member of the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (1995-1996)  
author of the Van Ness Avenue Auto Row Support Structures survey (2010)  
author of books and articles on San Francisco history and architecture

**From:** [Anneocrowley@aol.com](mailto:Anneocrowley@aol.com)  
**To:** [andrew@tefarch.com](mailto:andrew@tefarch.com)  
**Cc:** [Secretary, Commissions \(CPC\); Ferguson, Shannon \(CPC\)](#)  
**Subject:** Alemany Emergency Hospital & Health Center Buildings & Bernard Zakheim murals  
**Date:** Monday, February 08, 2016 9:42:19 PM

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Dear Commissioners:

I am writing in support of the preservation of the Alemany Emergency Hospital and Health Center Buildings and Bernard Zakheim murals. This building and original art are a precious commodity of our community history and are well worth preserving, in this era of rapid change in our community. We are the embodiment of our efforts to preserve what is valuable for our community and to preserve our history. Without that, San Francisco becomes a generic, soulless city without any sense of history or identity. Our children deserve to know what their forebears found important, and to have that sense of continuity. Our family has an intimate relationship with the Emergency Hospital as my son's Grandfather worked there as a doctor for many years, working hard to take care of his community, and our family continues to live in this neighborhood. The artwork that adorns the walls is worthy of being seen by all members of our city. Please take the time to consider the importance of this building for our community.

Sincerely,

Anne O'Crowley, Ph.D.

**From:** [Donna Gergurich](#)  
**To:** [andrew@tefarch.com](mailto:andrew@tefarch.com)  
**Cc:** [Secretary, Commissions \(CPC\)](#); [Ferguson, Shannon \(CPC\)](#)  
**Subject:** Alemany Emergency Hospital & Health Center/Bernard Zakheim Murals  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 09, 2016 12:38:36 PM

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*The New Mission Terrace Improvement Association has advised the landmark issue for the Alemany Emergency Hospital & Health Center Buildings & the Bernard Zakheim murals at 35 & 45 Onondaga Avenue will be on the agenda at the February 17<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission.*

*City heritage all too easily vanishes and we lose established buildings which are the core of San Francisco history. The Alemany Center has served the Excelsior area and beyond for many years and it would be a shame to have it disappear. Many individuals were taken care of when it was an operating care center, including my family members, and it was reassuring to know our neighborhood had a working facility ready to assist those in need.*

*It is part of the character of San Francisco and I would urge the Commission to preserve the buildings and murals and keep this particular heritage intact for San Franciscans who are aware of it now and those who will become aware of its presence in days to come. Let's not take away what we already have!*

*Thank you for your consideration & hopefully your agreement of this issue—*

**Donna M. Gergurich**

**(415) 632-5200**

**Fax: (415) 632-5238**

**[dgergurich@caleracapital.com](mailto:dgergurich@caleracapital.com)**

**From:** [Rita Gelini](#)  
**To:** [andrew@tefarch.com](mailto:andrew@tefarch.com)  
**Cc:** [Secretary, Commissions \(CPC\)](#)  
**Subject:** Alemany Emergency Hospital ...  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 09, 2016 1:29:51 PM

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I would like to support and advocate for the designation of landmark status to the former Alemany Emergency Hospital & Health Center Buildings and Bernard Zakheim murals at 35 and 45 Onondaga Ave. Dedicated in 1933 and 1934, they carry social and historical importance given that they were planned and designed by City Architect and administrator Charles H. Sawyer. The Health Center contains murals by Bernard Zakheim, artist of the Public Works Art Project (PWAP) that includes Coit Tower.

The buildings add distinction to our community in the Excelsior/Outer Mission. They hold intrinsic value and can be returned to purposeful usefulness that would serve our residents (as they had for decades).

I believe that Alemany Emergency Hospital & Health Center Buildings and the Bernard Zakheim murals enhance the history and character that is the Excelsior/Outer Mission and deserve to be established as historic landmarks. We have no lack of imagination for the benefit that these buildings could provide to our community now, and in the future.

Sincerely,

Rita Gelini  
1584 Alemany Blvd.  
SF 94112

**From:** [Denise Ruggeri](#)  
**To:** [Ferguson, Shannon \(CPC\)](#)  
**Subject:** Alemany ER  
**Date:** Monday, February 08, 2016 6:03:11 PM

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Please consider retaining this historically unique building. The murals are priceless art. The building could be utilized as a much needed community center. My family has lived in the Excelsior for over 100 years. My sister and I were brought to the Well Baby Clinic and ER. Thank you.

Denise Ruggeri  
225 Capistrano Ave  
San Francisco 94112

Sent from my iPad



**From:** [Scott Cataffa](#)  
**To:** [andrew@tefarch.com](mailto:andrew@tefarch.com)  
**Cc:** [Secretary, Commissions \(CPC\)](#); [Ferguson, Shannon \(CPC\)](#); [nmtiasf@gmail.com](mailto:nmtiasf@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** Alemany Emergency Hospital & Health Center Buildings  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 09, 2016 4:12:51 PM

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Dear Commissioner Wolfram,

I am writing to express my support of designating landmark status to the Alemany Emergency Hospital & Health Center Buildings and the Bernard Zakheim murals at 35 & 45 Onondaga Avenue.

As an Excelsior resident and design professional, I believe that preserving the murals in situ and developing an appropriate public or institutional program for the building will be a great asset to our neighborhood and the collection of historic resources in San Francisco. I am currently working with SF RPD on the adaptive reuse of the Geneva Car Barn and Powerhouse, an excellent example of the potential that under-utilized historic resources can have for our community.

You may not be aware of the contention over [Little City Gardens](#), a small farm in our neighborhood. The property owners would like to locate a private school on the site, and many neighbors do not support the land use change. I mention this project because I wonder if the city could broker a land swap for the hospital and health center. A primary school could be a suitable program; the community would benefit from the preservation of these unique buildings and the restoration of the Zakheim murals; and the neighborhood could keep our small farm. I realize that it is a more complicated transaction and that this is beyond the purview of your commission. I also know that it takes vision and political will to realize new futures for the city's abandoned real estate and I raise it as a potential solution for the city to consider.

You and I collaborated on the adaptive reuse of the Public Health Services Hospital in the Presidio, a successful rebirth of a dilapidated place with a distinctive history. I hope the Alemany Emergency Hospital and Health Center Buildings could be preserved so that it too could have a new life in our community.

Thank you for your time and for the great work that you and the Historic Preservation Commission do to maintain the unique integrity of our city's built environment.

Sincerely,

**Scott Cataffa**  
**CMG Landscape Architecture**  
Principal | 500 Third St, Suite 215 SF, CA 94107 | 415.495.3070 x 207  
[scataffa@cmgsite.com](mailto:scataffa@cmgsite.com) | [www.cmgsite.com](http://www.cmgsite.com)

February 9, 2016

Historic Preservation Commission  
City Hall  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
San Francisco, CA 94102

To the Historic Preservation Commissioners:

I am writing on behalf of the Excelsior Action group to express our unequivocal support to landmark the Alemany Emergency Hospital & Health Center Buildings & Bernard Zakheim murals at 35 & 45 Onondaga Avenue.

The Excelsior Action Group has been committed to revitalizing the Excelsior's commercial corridor through economic development efforts and also generating greater access to public art throughout the corridor. Examples of this work include the Ever Upward sculpture on Geneva and Mission, murals along the 280 overpass, the Excelsior Library Beautification, and Kenny Alley. EAG values how art furthers a sense of place in the community and promotes our growth as a neighborhood.

These publicly owned buildings are key neighborhood assets and carry a large significance in the Excelsior's history- from the artwork that adorns the walls to sit-ins in the 1970's. By landmarking these structures and the Zakheim murals you will be supporting and honoring the Excelsior's place in San Francisco's past and help future generations connect to our rich history as one of San Francisco's working class neighborhoods. Furthermore, you will be assuring that any future use of this space will uphold the intrinsic architectural elements that make these structures cultural icons.

Thank you in advance for your consideration. Please feel free to reach out to me at 415-585-0110 or [scajina@eagsf.org](mailto:scajina@eagsf.org) should you have any further questions.

Kind regards,



Stephanie Cajina  
Executive Director  
Excelsior Action Group

# F.A.C.E.

Friends & Advocates of Crocker Amazon and the Excelsior  
78 Havelock St. San Francisco, CA 94112

February 9, 2016

To: Historic Preservation Commission  
Andrew Wolfram, Commission President

Re: Alemany Emergency Hospital & Health Center Buildings & Bernard Zakheim murals at 35 & 45 Onondaga Avenue, San Francisco

FACE is a neighborhood community booster club. We produce a community newsletter that reaches over 200 citizens. We use our newsletter to support and advocate for the positive aspects of our community. We also work on assorted history projects, including a recent historic street sign project to recognize the former names of certain streets in our neighborhood that were changed after the 1906 earthquake but with the names : China, Japan and India. These names now represent a large section of our population. **The 35-45 Onondaga Avenue buildings, along with the Zakheim murals represent another hidden treasure in neighborhood history. We are emphatically in support of the inclusion of these buildings with official historical recognition.**

These publicly owned buildings are key neighborhood assets and have languished too long: the Onondaga buildings have been vacant for 5 years sites have been blights on our neighborhood, despite community support for their renovation. **F.A.C.E.** believes it is time for the City to invest in these buildings and ensure their rehabilitation and future community use. This will be aided by the status that your commission could confer.

We formed our organization in 2002 to promote the historical, cultural and positive aspects of our community. Our goal over all these years has been to sponsor and advocate for projects that would promote more neighborhood pride and identity. Both of these buildings are unique historical landmarks and could be converted to wonderful community uses. It has been very sad to see them deteriorate and to feel the frustration of watching the great potential of these buildings go unmet due to funding short falls. Our neighborhood suffers from a feeling of being neglected and lack of recognition of the wonderful assets we do have.

This is a wonderful opportunity to preserve a true neighborhood treasure.

Sincerely,

Linda Stark Litehiser Chairperson: F.A.C.E. (Friends and Advocates of Crocker Amazon & the Excelsiorcc:  
Commission Secretary: Jonas Ionin: [Commissions.Secretary@sfgov.org](mailto:Commissions.Secretary@sfgov.org)  
Preservation Planner: Shannon Ferguson: [Shannon.ferguson@sfgov.org](mailto:Shannon.ferguson@sfgov.org)  
New Mission Terrace Improvement Association: [nmtiasf@gmail.com](mailto:nmtiasf@gmail.com)

**From:** [Frye, Tim \(CPC\)](#)  
**To:** [Ferguson, Shannon \(CPC\)](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Alemany ER  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 09, 2016 1:01:15 PM

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- Tim

Timothy Frye  
Preservation Coordinator

Planning Department, City and County of San Francisco  
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400, San Francisco, CA 94103  
Direct: 415-575-6822 Fax: 415-558-6409  
Email: [tim.frye@sfgov.org](mailto:tim.frye@sfgov.org)  
Web: [www.sfplanning.org](http://www.sfplanning.org)

Planning Information Center (PIC): 415-558-6377 or [pic@sfgov.org](mailto:pic@sfgov.org)  
Property Information Map (PIM): <http://propertymap.sfplanning.org>

-----Original Message-----

From: Secretary, Commissions (CPC)  
Sent: Tuesday, February 09, 2016 8:05 AM  
To: Aaron Jon Hyland - HPC; Andrew Wolfram ([andrew@tefarch.com](mailto:andrew@tefarch.com)); Diane Matsuda; Ellen Johnck - HPC; Jonathan Pearlman; Karl Hasz; Richard S. E. Johns  
Cc: Frye, Tim (CPC); Son, Chanbory (CPC)  
Subject: FW: Alemany ER

FYI

Office of Commission Affairs

Planning Department!City & County of San Francisco  
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400, San Francisco, CA 94103  
Direct: 415-558-6309!Fax: 415-558-6409

[commissions.secretary@sfgov.org](mailto:commissions.secretary@sfgov.org)  
[www.sfplanning.org](http://www.sfplanning.org)

-----Original Message-----

From: Denise Ruggeri [<mailto:deniseruggeri@yahoo.com>]  
Sent: Monday, February 08, 2016 6:16 PM  
To: Secretary, Commissions (CPC)  
Subject: Alemany ER

Please do not allow this architecturally unique building with it's priceless murals to be destroyed. My family has lived in the Excelsior for over 100 years and has used the ER and the Well Baby Clinic. District 11 is frequently treated as a "stepchild ", with freeways dissecting it and MMJ dispensaries allowed to flourish. The hardworking residents deserve to retain this building.

Denise Ruggeri  
225 Capistrano Ave

SF 94112

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Frye, Tim \(CPC\)](#)  
**To:** [Ferguson, Shannon \(CPC\)](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Landmarking for 35-45 Onondaga  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 16, 2016 5:06:06 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)  
[image005.png](#)

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- Tim

**Timothy Frye**  
**Historic Preservation Officer**

Planning Department, City and County of San Francisco  
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400, San Francisco, CA 94103  
**Direct:** 415-575-6822 **Fax:** 415-558-6409  
**Email:** [tim.frye@sfgov.org](mailto:tim.frye@sfgov.org)  
**Web:** [www.sfplanning.org](http://www.sfplanning.org)



**Planning Information Center (PIC):** 415-558-6377 or [pic@sfgov.org](mailto:pic@sfgov.org)  
**Property Information Map (PIM):** <http://propertymap.sfplanning.org>

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**From:** Eric Johnson [mailto:[pseudolus1@sonic.net](mailto:pseudolus1@sonic.net)]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 16, 2016 4:54 PM  
**To:** [aaron.hyland.hpc@gmail.com](mailto:aaron.hyland.hpc@gmail.com); [karl@haszinc.com](mailto:karl@haszinc.com); [ellen.hpc@ellenjohnckconsulting.com](mailto:ellen.hpc@ellenjohnckconsulting.com);  
[RSEJohns@yahoo.com](mailto:RSEJohns@yahoo.com); [diane@johnburtonfoundation.org](mailto:diane@johnburtonfoundation.org); [jonathan.pearlman.hpc@gmail.com](mailto:jonathan.pearlman.hpc@gmail.com); Frye, Tim (CPC); Secretary, Commissions (CPC); Ruiz-Esquide, Andrea (CAT)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Landmarking for 35-45 Onondaga

----- Forwarded Message -----

**Subject:** Landmarking for 35-45 Onondaga  
**Date:** Tue, 16 Feb 2016 16:37:05 -0800  
**From:** Eric Johnson <[pseudolus1@sonic.net](mailto:pseudolus1@sonic.net)>  
**To:** [andrew@tefarch.com](mailto:andrew@tefarch.com)

I write to raise a concern about this Historic Preservation Committee agenda item.

Your agenda packet omits a key paragraph in the Landmark Designation Application:

The omitted paragraph can be found in the neighborhood newspaper, the Ingleside Light:

<http://www.ielightsf.com/2016/01/07/the-alemany-emergency-hospital-and-health-center-the-hidden-history-behind-the-new-deal-era-buildings/>

"In 1978, the newly instituted district elections. Dan White was elected supervisor for the Excelsior/Outer Mission area. He spoke publicly in favor of keeping the Alemany hospital open. District elections were designed to make sure the voices of the neighborhoods were heard

downtown and this was the first year of that experiment."

This strange paragraph portrays Supervisor and assassin Dan White in the best light possible. Dan White had no role in the sit-in, which in fact was organized by a political opponent of his, Bob Barnes. The author fails to mention Mr. Barnes and the other participants in the sit-in. I asked the publisher and the author what their intentions were and did not receive a satisfactory answer.

I do not want a Dan White memorial/tribute in my neighborhood.

Eric Johnson  
40 Delano Ave

**From:** [NMTIA NMTIA](#)  
**To:** [Andrew@tefarch.com](mailto:Andrew@tefarch.com)  
**Cc:** [Ferguson, Shannon \(CPC\)](#); [Secretary, Commissions \(CPC\)](#)  
**Subject:** Landmarking of Alemany Emergency Hospital, Health Center and Zakheim murals  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 09, 2016 12:53:32 PM

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Please find below a message of support from Daniel Weaver

----- Forwarded message -----  
**From:** **Daniel Weaver** <[djpweaver@gmail.com](mailto:djpweaver@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Tue, Feb 9, 2016 at 12:46 PM  
**Subject:** Landmarking  
**To:** NMTIA NMTIA <[nmtiasf@gmail.com](mailto:nmtiasf@gmail.com)>

David,

I support the effort to landmark the Alemany Emergency Hospital & Health Center Buildings & Bernard Zakheim murals at 35 & 45 Onondaga Avenue. that will be on the the Historic Preservation Commission's agenda on Wednesday, February 17th, 12:30-4pm, City Hall, Commission Chambers.

District 11 needs more landmarks to help document its history.

Daniel Weaver



**From:** [Anne](#)  
**To:** [andrew@tefarch.com](mailto:andrew@tefarch.com); [Commissions.Secretary@sfgov.org](mailto:Commissions.Secretary@sfgov.org); [Ferguson, Shannon \(CPC\)](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in support of landmark status: Alemany Emergency Hospital and murals  
**Date:** Monday, February 08, 2016 7:37:27 PM

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Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to support the effort to preserve and obtain landmark status for the two buildings associated with the Bernard Zakheim frescoes. I have toured the buildings, and believe these should be protected by bestowing landmark status.

I am an art conservator who has worked for years with the San Francisco Arts Commission, and I have expertise in fresco paintings. The Zakheim murals are special in many ways, and certainly worthy of protection. Frescoes by their nature are PART OF THE ARCHITECTURE, they are site specific art works, and efforts to move them elsewhere are generally destructive. Not only was Mr. Zakheim acknowledged as a fine painter in his day, he is important to the history of mural paintings in San Francisco, and to the burgeoning numbers of people who appreciate WPA works of art in the City. As a native of San Francisco, I am thrilled by his subject matter in this case, particularly as the second floor mural documents the Excelsior neighborhood, which has changed so dramatically over time. This is perhaps the only fresco (and they are rare, indeed) to document the cityscape of the southern portion of town. The partially obscured fresco on the first floor can be successfully treated and restored.

I have worked on some of the City's finest frescoes (Coit Tower, the Beach Chalet, and others). The Beach Chalet was destined for the wrecking ball prior to the campaign of one City Supervisor to save it in 1987. I have seen the remarkable change in the status of these landmarks due to the preservation of the murals, and the interest they generate in preservation. They also enhance neighborhoods, and are a source of pride for people living there.

Please let this happen for Mission Terrace, and for the wonderful frescoes.

Yours truly,  
Anne Rosenthal, Fine Art Conservator  
San Rafael, CA  
415.720.5360  
415.883.8050

Excuse the brevity - Sent from my mobile device  
Anne Rosenthal Fine Art Conservation  
415.883.8050

February 9, 2016

To: Historic Preservation Commission

Andrew Wolfram, Commission President, email: [andrew@tefarch.com](mailto:andrew@tefarch.com).

Re: Alemany Emergency Hospital & Health Center Buildings & Bernard Zakheim murals at 35 & 45 Onondaga Avenue, San Francisco

Dear Commissioners; My husband and I are residents and home owners of the Mission Terrace neighborhood and Supervisorial District 11.

We are in wholehearted support of the proposal to bring landmark status to the two buildings a few blocks from our home under consideration before you commission.

Our neighborhood is a rich blend of diversity, but what we do lack is any strong preservation efforts for structures related to our historic past. It is with great excitement that people in our neighborhood have welcomed this effort to preserve these buildings. So many of our neighbors were completely surprised and excited by the revelation that such historic murals still existed. It is widely agreed that preserving such assets will increase pride in our community. Over the years we have lost a lot of historic buildings. This is a rare opportunity to keep some piece of our history.

We urge you to support the landmarking process with the necessary designation.

Best regards, Linda and Joe Litehiser

78 Havelock St.

San Francisco, CA 94112

cc: Commission Secretary: Jonas Ionin: [Commissions.Secretary@sfgov.org](mailto:Commissions.Secretary@sfgov.org)

Preservation Planner: Shannon Ferguson: [Shannon.ferguson@sfgov.org](mailto:Shannon.ferguson@sfgov.org)

New Mission Terrace Improvement Association:

February 9, 2016

To: Historic Preservation Commission

Andrew Wolfram, Commission President, email: [andrew@tefarch.com](mailto:andrew@tefarch.com).

Subject: expression of community support for the effort to obtain a landmarking designation for the **Alemaný Emergency Hospital & Health Center** buildings at 35 & 46 Onondaga Ave and for the **Bernard Zakheim murals** in Health Center building.

Dear President Wolfram and Commissioners,

On behalf of the New Mission Terrace Improvement Association, please allow me to express our support for the effort to landmark the Alemaný Emergency Hospital, adjacent Health Center and the Bernard Zakheim murals contained in the Health Center.

These building have a high value to our community and represent the effort to acknowledge the importance of extending health services to working class districts during the Great Depression. The service provided at these site gave generations of San Franciscans an expectation of the benefits of public health. The loss of the emergency services in 1978 and the abandonment of these buildings in recent years has contributed to the economic problems our diverse community faces today.

While our neighborhood and our district is a rich blend of diversity, we have lacked a strong preservation focus. The landmarking designations would help us develop a greater preservation focus for these sites and would help us return them to public service and create value for the community in the future.

This is a rare opportunity to keep an important part of our history and improve the community. We urge you to support the landmarking process with the necessary designation.

Thank you,

David Hooper,

President, New Mission Terrace Improvement Association

P.O. Box 12111

San Francisco, CA 94112

cc: Commission Secretary: Jonas Ionin: [Commissions.Secretary@sfgov.org](mailto:Commissions.Secretary@sfgov.org)

Preservation Planner: Shannon Ferguson: [Shannon.ferguson@sfgov.org](mailto:Shannon.ferguson@sfgov.org)

February 9, 2016

Mr. Andrew Wolfram, President  
Historic Preservation Commission  
1650 Mission St. Suite 400  
San Francisco, CA. 9410

Dear President Wolfram:

It is with great urgency that I write this letter in support of our neighborhood's effort to preserve and landmark the Alemany Emergency Hospital & Health Center Building and the Bernard Zakheim Murals. These building and murals are located at 35 and 45 Onondaga Avenue. The buildings and murals are beginning to fall into disrepair and deserve our immediate attention.

As a concerned and involved resident of District 11, I see the inherent value in recognizing and retaining these historic buildings and murals. They are a sense of pride for the residents of our district, as well as a piece of the City and County of San Francisco's history. We are not a neighborhood full of historic buildings, particularly ones with historic murals, and thus desire to preserve a small but important piece of our past.

In conclusion, I fully support the efforts to landmark the Alemany Emergency Hospital & Health Center Building as well as the Bernard Zakheim Murals and hope your commission looks favorably on this endeavor.

Sincerely,

Ahsha Safai  
District 11 Resident