

# **Local History and Historic Preservation in Davis, California, 1963-2002: Draft Manuscript**

**John Lofland**

Department of Sociology  
University of California Davis  
Davis, CA 95616  
530-758-5258  
jlofland@ucdavis.edu

**Draft of November, 2002**  
(with slight changes in August, 2006)

---

This is an early draft. Therefore, it surely contains errors of commission and of omission. I would greatly appreciate being told about both.

## Contents

### 1. Local History Researching, 1963-68

The 1963-68 "Commission"  
 An Archive and a Book, *Davisville '68*  
 The 1968 Davis Centennial

### 2. Struggle, 1969-77

The Davis Historical Landmarks Commission, 1969  
 First Preservation Campaigns  
     Murmuring, 417 G Street, 1973  
     First Grassroots Campaign: Second Street Houses, 1975  
     The Hunt-Boyer Mansion, Late 1970s.  
 The Larkey "Portraits of the Past" Series, 19xx-xx  
 Subway I, 1973.  
 First Owner Resistance to Designation, 1973  
 The U. S. Bicentennial, 1976  
 Davis' Three National Register Entries, Late 1970s  
 The Larger Davis Scene  
     Demolition Mania, 1950s-1970s  
     The Political Revolution of 1972

### 3. Crisis and Professionalization, 1978-87

Three External Changes Affecting Davis Preservation  
     Proposition 13 Trauma, Late 1970s  
     Preservation Professionals Emerge, Late 1970s-Early 1980s  
     "Cultural Resources" Survey, 1979-80  
 Survey-Spurred Further Changes  
     New Historic Preservation Code, 1984  
     Re-Certifying "Landmarks" as "Historic Resources"  
 Other Aspects of the 1978-87 Period  
     Failure to Designate the Terminal Building  
     Adaptive Reuse Begins, Late 1970s  
     The Old High School Becomes City Hall, 1981  
     The Avenue of the Trees Revolt, 1984  
     Second Printing of *Davisville '68*, 1980

### 4. Percolating Quiescence, 1988-94

The City Council Preserves Buildings  
     Southern Pacific Station Rehabilitation, 1980s  
     From Old Library to Part-Time Museum, Late '80s-Early '90s  
     Varsity Theater Leased and Remodeled, Early 1990s  
     Hunt-Boyer Purchased, 1994  
 Other City Preservation Activities  
     The 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Davis' Incorporation, 1992  
     The Second Davis History Book, Late '80s-90s  
 Citizen Campaigns  
     The First "Defended Neighborhood:" Old East Davis, 1988  
     Subway II, 1988  
     Alley Paving Protest, 1991-2

### 5. Resurgence and Reaction, 1995-02

The HRMC Moves Upscale.  
 The HRMC Becomes a Certified Local Government  
 Three Major Official Actions  
     The Second Cultural Resources Survey, 1996.  
     Eight New Designations  
     Conservation District Design Guidelines, 2001  
 Subway III, 1996-97  
 A Second Flurry of Local History  
 Old East Davis Festivals, 1998---  
 Terminal Building Demolition, 2000  
 An Aside: The City Becomes the Major Figure in Historic Buildings

### Draft of the Acknowledgements

This is an analytic history of local history and historic preservation in Davis, California over the years 1963 to 2002.

Let me explain the ideas of “local history,” “historic preservation” and “analytic history.” Briefly elaborated, they provide an overview of this paper.

The term **local history** denotes activities in which residents of an immediate area organize to assemble and to write up materials on prior residents of that same area. “Local history” is a variable, differing in form and extent from area to area and over time within a given area. This means that an area can lack much local history, as Davis apparently did before 1963. Or, an area can have a great deal of it at a given time, as Davis apparently did in 1963-68.

For present purposes, the idea of **historic preservation** refers to occasions on which residents of an area try to forestall or to stop the demolition or other untoward alteration of physical objects in the built or natural environment that these residents deem to have cultural significance and therefore to require stewardship. Commonly, such objects are buildings, but they are also sometimes structures such as bridges, groves of trees, streetscapes, or neighborhoods. Like local history, historic preservation is a variable. Davis apparently had little or no historic preservation before about 1969. It was rather weak in the 1970s and appears to have waxed and waned over the 1980s and 1990s.

By **analytic history** I mean that although I strive to provide a chronology of local history and historic preservation activities. I also try to draw out patterns and to group events into pertinent categories. Often, this requires departing from historical sequences strictly construed. In doing this, my aim is rise above the pattern-less tedium of “this happened and then that happened.” The hope, instead, is to discern at least a little pattern and logic in some events.

I must alert readers that the story I tell here is **only one part** of the larger story of Davis social life and social change over 1963-2002. Indeed, the story in this paper is literally extracted from a larger work on a historic preservation event in Davis and factors involved in understanding it. The event to which I refer is the demolition, in the year 2000, of a building first called the Terminal Hotel and then called the Aggie Hotel. Therefore, if you feel the urge to know more and experience a sense of incompleteness, you are feeling and experiencing correctly. So long as you understand this, it is safe to read what follows.

As near as I can tell, local history (but perhaps not historical preservation) began as an organized activity in Davis in 1963. Therefore, in the year 2002, there were 39 years of activity to chronicle and to analyze. In standing back and looking at these 39 years as whole, they seem to me to divide into five periods. In overview, these are:

1. 1963-68: Local History Researching
2. 1969-77: Struggle
3. 1978-87: Crisis and the New Professionals
4. 1988-94: Percolating Quiescence
5. 1995-02: Resurgence and Reaction

I hope it goes almost without saying that I recognize that I am oversimplifying in stating periods that appear to have clear boundaries and that give the appearance of being tight compartments of time. Obviously, the reality is much more overlapping and imprecise. Nonetheless, there were clusters of changes over these decades that are signaled in this oversimplification. I have elected to pay the price of oversimplification in order to achieve a degree of clarity.

In addition, I have not sought to present an exhaustive inventory of local history and historic preservation activities. I include only those matters that I know about and judge to be of major import or of a charming character even if of minor significance. I apologize to anyone offended by my having left out his or her favorite activity, episode or person. Nonetheless, this is a draft and I know that this account is incomplete. Calls for changes are therefore very much in order.

**1. LOCAL HISTORY RESEARCHING, 1963-68.** In the six or so years of the initial period, there were three main activities.

**The 1963-68 “Commission.”** Organized local history activity in Davis can be dated from March 18, 1963, when then Mayor Norman Woodbury personally convened and chaired a meeting of a quasi-official citizen’s “commission.” It had the charge of assembling Davis history, but it had no staff, no legal powers, and met in the homes of its members rather than in City quarters. Although its official title was the Davis Historical Landmarks Commission, it was not, in the ways just mentioned, like other commissions.

This group’s picture was taken in January, 1968 and is reproduced in Fig. 1. Inspecting it, we can see the members are, for the most part, rather older. One key exception is the woman fourth from the left in the photo, who is **Joann Leach Larkey**. In her mid-thirties in the early 1960s, she was the daughter of a well-known UCD professor, a graduate of UC Berkeley, and the spouse of a local physician.

**An Archive and a Book, *Davisville ’68*** As an educated, intelligent, and energetic member of the Davis elite, Mrs. Larkey led the local history effort, assisted by many people. Among other things, this effort resulted in an archive of photographs and other documents (now housed in the Yolo County Archives) and in the book *Davisville ’68*, which has endured as the indispensable chronicle of early Davis history (Larkey, 1969).

The labor for researching and writing this book was entirely volunteer or paid by the Chamber of Commerce Centennial Fund. The 2,000 copy printing was subsidized in part by a some \$9,000 loan from the City Council (which was finally paid off in 1975.)

Also of special note in Fig. 1, the man standing second from the left is **John Weber Brinley**. Mr. Brinley was the grandson of **George Augustus Weber**, a gentleman who opened a saloon at the southwest corner of Second and G not long after Davis was founded in 1868 and, about 1880, built a mansion at the northeast corner of Second and E streets. Present at the founding of Davis, Mr. Weber was a first generation pioneer.

Mr. Brinley’s father, **Al Green (Sam) Brinley**, came to Davis in 1912 as the ticket agent of the Southern Pacific station and married into the Weber family. He inherited the Weber properties and acquired yet others after he retired from the railroad in 1947 and established Brinley’s Real Estate and Insurance Office (Larkey, 1969, 222-113). His son John Weber Brinley inherited these holdings and he was a major Davis landlord of commercial buildings (an enterprise carried on his son, **John K. Brinley**).

I digress on the Weber-Brinley family because of the clear way in which these four men tightly encapsulate the entire span of Davis history. The fourth of them, John K. was, in 2000, only the fourth generation since the founding of the town—and John K. was barely in his fifties.

This information is background to understanding that the affable and very popular Sam and John Weber Brinley had, together, lived through a great deal of Davis history and knew

virtually everyone. John Weber Brinley, in particular, was instrumental in encouraging Davis “old timers” to cooperate with this citizen’s history group.

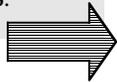
One irony is that while Mr. Brinley was working so effectively on collecting Davis history, he was himself demolishing Davis buildings. These included even the historic mansion his grandfather, George Weber, had built at the corner of Second and E. (Today, the three story commercial building at that corner is called The Brinley Building. The mansion previously on the site is pictured in Larkey 1969, 222; Lofland and Haig, 2000, 25.)

In addition, members of this “Commission” began developing a list of “landmark structures,” which might be seen as a kind of muted or backdoor resistance to the demolitions going on so energetically around them. So far as I can determine, however, this group never engaged in public opposition to demolition.

**The 1968 Davis Centennial.** One of the most important actions of this quasi-commission was early-on to determine and to assert that 1968 would be the “centennial” of Davis’ founding. Fortunately for the production of “history-events,” the University of California and the school district also both believed they were founded in 1868. So, schemes for celebrating Davis’ history could be and were coordinated with and augmented by these other centennials in the same year.

The Centennial Committee was organized by the Davis Area Chamber of Commerce (not the City of Davis) and its Co-chairs were John Weber Brinley and Joann Larkey. The climax event, among many other celebrations over the year, was a luncheon attended by about 500 people in UC Davis’ Freeborn Hall on Saturday, June 1, 1968. It was designed to honor “descendants of pioneer families,” as well as “past city officials and businessmen” (*Davis Enterprise*, June 3, 1968).

1. Davis Historical Landmarks Commission, *Davis Enterprise*, January 18, 1968.



**FACT FINDERS** — Members of the Davis Historical Landmarks Commission and members of pioneer families of the Davis area got together last night at city hall to help identify old photographs from Davis’ past in preparation for a centennial publication of the city’s history. Shown are commission

members (front row, from left) Katherine Campbell, Thelma Dietrich, Vere Asbill, Violet Gordon, John Rogers, Narcissa Pena, and (back row, from left) Jane Dolcini, Delpha Williamson, Joann Larkey, Chelso Maghetti, Gary Rowe and John Brinley.

—Enterprise Photo

Also relevant, by the mid-1960s, history/preservationist sentiments were quickening across the nation. These stirrings were expressed perhaps most importantly in the United States National

Historic Preservation Act of 1966, which began the serious involvement of the Federal government in preservation matters (Murtagh, 1977: ch. 5).

**2. STRUGGLE 1969-77.** The 1966 Preservation Act created the expectation, if not the requirement, that any upstanding local government needed a preservation commission.

**The Davis Historical Landmarks Commission, 1969.** Apparently wanting to be *au courant*, in late 1968 the Davis City Council created a true preservation commission, which met the first time on March 6, 1969. At that time, such commissions existed in only about thirty of the some 500 California municipalities and counties (National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1976) and most of these commissions were only a few years old. So, Davis, it would appear, was an early joiner of a new trend. (By the year 2000, virtually all California jurisdictions had some form of an official preservation program.)[check on exact percentage.]

The previous "Commission" continued a shadow existence with a bank account in the name of The Davis Historical Society. It finally disbanded in 1975, when John Weber Brinley closed the account with a check for \$2,571.25 written to the City trust account of the new commission (Haig Collection, Box 5).

The new Commission began to develop a list of "historical landmarks," "primarily composed of structures around a hundred years old," which were then designated as such by the City Council (Taylor 1980, 5). In 1973, the City Council gave thirteen of these landmark structures some protection by allowing delay of demolitions. The list grew gradually in subsequent years. Over the next ten years, the Council enacted a patchwork of three ordinances designed to designate "landmarks" and perhaps delay demolitions (Ordinance number 651 in 1973, number 722 in 1974, and number 882 in 1977).

**First Preservation Campaigns.** Many buildings were still being torn down with no adverse comment or protest, but at least three now began to attract preservationist attention.

**Murmuring: 417 G Street, 1973.** An especially striking Victorian with wooden ornamentation of the "Chalet" type at 417 G was demolished in 1973, but with public expressions of regret that no way could seemingly be found to save it.

**First Grassroots Campaign: Second Street Houses, 1975.** In 1975, prolific local developer and builder Jim Adams fielded a plan to tear down all the heritage homes along the south side of Second Street between C and D streets and to replace them with a block long commercial complex. UC Davis undergraduate and artist, Julie Partansky, lived in one of the to-be-demolished homes. Personally subject to eviction, she sparked the first grassroots campaign for preservation (as distinct from the more establishment effort to save the Hunt Boyer mansion). In Fig. 2, she is shown sitting in front of her threatened home.

This campaign (which failed) is of special interest because it marks the debut of Ms. Partansky in Davis political life. After her house was demolished, she moved to a cottage on a gravel alley in the 600 block of E Street. She lived there quietly and did not participate in Davis politics for the next fifteen years. But then, in 1991, Davis Demolitionists again came calling at her door--literally, not just metaphorically. It was a fateful moment because her encounter with them subsequently changed Davis history--as will be explained.

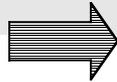
**The Hunt-Boyer Mansion, Late 1970s.** A number of fair-sized mansions were built in the late nineteenth century on Second between F and B streets. By the early 1970s, only one of them remained. At the southeast corner of Second and E, it would come to be called "the Hunt-Boyer" (after two of its early owners). Built in 1875, this "last remaining" status appears to have

sparked the first major, mainstream or “elite” effort to preserve a threatened heritage building in Davis.

This effort first took the form of a City Council decision to float a bond issue to save the building in connection with a new city hall on the site. This scheme failed at the ballot box in November of 1976 by a vote of 54% in favor, but two-thirds required for adoption.

The owner of the mansion had taken out a demolition permit, but also said he was willing to sell the building and property for \$250,000. The Council acted to stall the demolition in the hope of another solution. A campaign called SAVE (for Save A Victorian Establishment) to raise the money from private sources ensued. Although led by and donated to by the Davis elite (including UCD Chancellor Emil Mrak and John Weber Brinley), the effort could come up with only \$26,772. The matter dragged on and the building was finally “saved” in 1978 when a partnership of developers met the owner's price and made preservation possible by building a complex of shops (called "Mansion Square") behind the house (*Davis Enterprise*, May 30, 1978; December 21, 1979)

2. Julie Partansky, *Davis Enterprise*,  
November 19, 1975.



### **The Larkey “Portraits of the Past” Series, 197x-7x. [to be written]**

**Subway I, 1973.** A fourth episode in this period was not clearly a preservation campaign, but would foreshadow two, more preservation-like, events over the next decades.

South of the First and E streets intersection there was an automobile road under the railroad tracks. Called the “subway” or The Richards Boulevard Underpass, it was built in 1917. As the decades went by, developer forces increasingly regarded it as an obstruction to the full car development of the downtown. They called for widening it to four or more lanes.

By the end of the twentieth century, the City Council would have made three efforts to widen the under-crossing, which failed each time: 1973, 1988 and 1997. I will call these Subway I, II, and III.

Voter failure to approve bonds or other spending is not necessarily a preservationist act. Most often it is not. Voters simply do not want to pay more taxes for the proposal at hand. Such was importantly the case in these three instances.

But, if we review the reasons people stated pro and con in the campaigns we do detect a preservationist element. There was at least the theme of preserving Davis as a “small town” place with a “real” downtown. In Subway III, however, we did see expression of interest in preserving the Subway **itself** as a historic structure.

Be these preservation ambiguities as they may, the Subway I, 1973 proposal failed nearly 3 to 2 (38% yes, 62% no, *Davis Enterprise*, November 8, 1972).

**First Owner Resistance to Designation, 1973.** Mrs. Iva M. Bruhn of 305 E Street appears to have the distinction of being the first of a series of owners who would oppose listing their properties as a “landmark” or “historical resource.” In a letter to the City Council dated October 28, 1974, Mrs. Bruhn declared “there are numerous sites in town where historical places have been and torn down. There is nothing to show that they or mine are a historical place” (Haig Collection, Box 3). She also had an attorney write the City Council expressing her view. Her house at 305 E was dropped from the list of possible designated resources.

**The U.S. Bicentennial, 1976.** Davis local history and preservationist people organized to celebrate the U. S. Bicentennial. And, they used the occasion to elaborate at last two local history angles.

First, a “see Davis history on your bike” route was mapped out and printed in a leaflet showing where to ride and what to see. Revised and refined several times, this would become a standard history-promotion item. Second, the Chamber of Commerce organized the painting of history murals on buildings, one of which was the Arch mural on the north wall of the Terminal Building.

**Davis’ Three National Register Entries, Late 1970s.** The United States National Register of Historic Places, begun in 1966, had, in 2002, nearly 75,000 listings.

Four of them are in the Davis city limits. Three of the four were nominated for (and earned) that distinction in 1976-79, a period when preservation in Davis was struggling and not especially assertive or successful. How did these achievements occur in such an inauspicious period?

It happened because the Federal process allowed individuals to make nominations to the National Register. Local government participation and approval could be helpful, but was not required. And that is what happened in Davis. Three enterprising and knowledgeable individuals carried out the process with little involvement in official Davis preservation circles and government. Thus:

- A student intern named Judy Bond at the State Office of Historical Preservation prepared and processed the case for the Hunt-Boyer Mansion at 604 Second Street. Approved for the National Register on September 13, 1976, at that time the building was threatened with demolition and registration was seen as an effort to “legitimize . . . claims that the . . . structure is truly of historical significance” [*Davis Enterprise*, September 13, 1976].

- The case for the Southern Pacific Railroad Station, Second and H streets, was developed and carried through by a person whose role and identity no one I have asked can now recall: Robert M. Wood. It was approved on November 7, 1976. Indeed, Mr. Wood must be counted among Davis' truly unsung and unknown preservationist heroes.
- The owner-occupant of the Joshua B. Tufts House at 434 J Street, Valerie Jones, brought about the listing of her own home on September 6, 1979 (*Davis Enterprise*, November 23, 1979). (The sources of the names of the above nominators are the respective nomination forms, which are on file with the City of Davis Cultural Services Manager and the National Registrar of Historic Places.)

**The Larger Davis Scene.** [to be written]]

**Demolition Mania, 1950s-1970s.**

**The "Political Revolution" of 1972.**

**3. CRISIS AND THE NEW PROFESSIONALS, 1978-87.** The third period featured significant influences from outside Davis along with some distinctive, indigenous happenings.

**Three External Changes Affecting Davis Preservation.** In the later 1970s, the world outside Davis was changing in three ways that brought about changes in Davis preservation activities.

**Proposition 13 Budget Trauma, Late 1970s.** In June, 1978, the California electorate adopted a constitutional amendment that sharply curbed property taxes accruing to local governments. This and subsequent state legislation restricted tax revenues even more and sent shock waves of spending cuts through local governments. (At the City Council meeting of June 21, 1978, two Members voted to "stop supplying pens and pencils to . . . City employees." The motion failed with two Members against and one absent.)

Already at or near the bottom of lists of spending priorities, City of Davis preservation spending was virtually stopped. Specifically, the single part time City staff person who worked with the Commission--William H. Taylor, Jr.--was reassigned to other duties. (In Fig. 3, he is shown at work.) He continued to help the Commission on his own time, but, in frustration, ceased in August, 1979. In a memo to the City Manager, Taylor described the Davis preservation situation in this fashion:

I think it is . . . accurate to say that there is a lack of substantive support for Historical Preservation/Restoration/Education from the City Council, the Planning Commission, the community, etc., (to differing degrees certainly). This observation is not meant to be judgmental, I ' m just stating what I believe to be the current reality. . . . The present "voluntary" framework, combined with what I have seen other communities accomplish, makes the frustrations of the current arrangement unacceptable to me. It is with regret that I rescind my former offer of voluntary service to the Davis Historical and Landmarks Commission (Haig Collection, Box 2).

This event provoked members of the Commission to speak "mutinously of their lowly stature in the city [and they] made plans to take their grievances to the City Council . . . . The commission currently has no quarters, no storage space, no regular meeting place and no city aide to help with its work" (*Davis Enterprise*, September 12, 1979). Among other indignities, the December 18, 1979 meeting was cancelled for "lack of a meeting place." In the *Davis Enterprise* of January 23, 1980: a reporter observed, "No other commission in the city raises money to pay for itself, but the funds used by the Historical and Landmarks Commission come from publication sales and donations raised by the commission."

**Professional Preservationists Emerge, Late 1970s–Early 1980s.** One of the effects of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966—and subsequent amplifying legislation at both national and state levels—was to begin to create a new kind of occupation: the professional preservationist. Part architect, part historian, part lawyer, part developer, part bureaucrat, this new kind of job specialized in assessing the “whats” and “whys” of “historic resources”—the new, central concept of this occupation. (Because preservation is so heavily volunteer, these professionals have come to refer to themselves with ironic humor as “preservationists-for-hire.”)

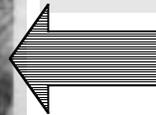
Training programs for this symbol-intensive specialty were only starting. Therefore, many early practitioners were not formally trained in the topic. Instead, they were self-taught migrants from disciplines that overlapped preservation. As with other new professions, preservation attracted young people rather than older, occupation-changers.



3. William H. Taylor, Jr., referred to in many city documents as “the Administrative Assistant II,” pictured in the *Davis Enterprise* of April 28, 1975. He is at 231 G Street, the site of a demolished building.

In 1975, this kind of poking around at demolition sites was considered just fine. However, more recent preservationist practice requires that professional archeologists do this job.

Even so, the excavation of the Terminal Building site in 2000 did not rate the presence of City staff, “Administrative Assistant II” or not.



Such was the case for the two preservationists who chaired the Commission in the early 1980s and who had much influence on the course of Davis preservation. This influence included a ground-up consolidation and systematization of the old patchwork of ordinances, including a change in the very name of the commission. A term like “landmark” had come to seem quaint and antique. One had, instead, in the new national nomenclature, “historic resources.” So, in the new ordinance of 1984, the commission went from the Davis Historical Landmarks Commission to the Historical Resources Management Commission (HRMC).

The first of these new, young professionals was Robin Datel (Fig. 4), a native of Stockton, California who graduated from UC Davis in 1976 and who was a “historic preservation specialist” in the California Office of Historic Preservation in the mid-1970s. She earned a Ph.D. in geography at the University of Minnesota in 1983 and returned to Davis. Her specialty was the geography of historical preservation (“why places are preserved”) and she published important research on that topic (e.g. Datel, 1985; Datel and Dingemans, 1988).

Following her as Commission Chair was Stephen Mikesell (Fig. 5), B. A., Harvard University, who had done graduate work in history at UC Davis before going to work for the State of California Office of Historic Preservation, the place of his employment while he served on the Davis HRMC



4. Robin Datel, *Davis Enterprise* photo in the Question-Of-The-Day column, May 13, 1983.



5. Stephen Mikesell, second from the left, *Davis Enterprise*, January 13, 1983.

Commission composition was also changing in other ways. The early commissioners were “old Davis” in the sense that they were born in the town, or had lived there a long time. For them, local history and preservation often had a genealogical slant.

In the later 1970s, these features were changing. Neither Datel or Mikesell were born in Davis and neither had lived there very long. Both were young. (Datel was twenty-eight when she became commission chair in 1982.) These two features were now also seen in yet other new members of the Commission. For these younger immigrants, there was no genealogical slant or quest for “roots.” Instead, this was a new cosmopolitanism in which one was interested in local dead strangers because of a broad interest in, and appreciation of, the past, and a desire to learn from it.

**“Cultural Resources” Survey, 1979-80.** By the later 1970s Federal and regional government programs were financially encouraging local governments to perform a “survey of cultural

resources.” This was a fancy name for hiring one of the new professional preservation organizations to orchestrate a listing of, mostly, a jurisdiction’s older buildings (those 50 + years old) thought possibly to possess historical importance.

In Davis, this took the form of contracting, in 1978, with the recently formed Sacramento firm of Historic Environment Consultants. Specifically, this was Paula Boghosian, another young preservationist in this new occupation. She trained and supervised a volunteer corps of almost two dozen Davis surveyors. The surveyors, members of the Commission, and Ms. Boghosian filled out the new official historical resource form on 140 Davis and Davis-area structures (The one for the Terminal Building is reproduced in Fig. 6). Mr. Boghosian put these forms in final order and added considerable text on the larger and broader historical context of Davis.

As a physical object, the survey was a hefty tome of 450 letter-sized, comb-bound pages (Historic Environments Consultants, 1980). Something like 50 photocopies were made of it; as an economy measure additional copies were prohibited by the then Assistant City Manager. Presented to the public in June, 1980, the inventory was intended as a wide net that captured all structures that were plausibly historical (*Davis Enterprise*, April 18, 1979). In doing this, it set the stage for isolating an "elite" class of structures that were of special import.

The survey cost \$9,000 and was possible despite post-Prop 13 tight budgets because the Sacramento Regional Planning Commission funded \$4,000, which was matched by \$3,5000 from the Commission’s Historic Trust Fund and \$1,500 from the City’s General Fund (Taylor 1981, 4). (For several years, the Chamber of Commerce sponsored an antique show and other fund-raising activities, which, together with receipts from the Larkey book, gave the HRMC a modest account on which it could draw.) (This regional-local matching grant arrangement is yet another example of how the level and form of local preservation was importantly influenced by outside agencies.)

**Survey-Spurred Further Changes.** The 1980 survey was the starting point for and the basis of a new era in Davis preservation. In addition to the three externally stimulated changes just enumerated, there were two further changes based on, and made possible by, the existence of the survey.

**A New Historic Preservation Code, 1984.** As part of her contract, Paula Boghosian made a list of recommended changes in the existing patchwork of preservation ordinances and wrote the outlines of a consolidated and extended replacement. Her recommendations were informed by her knowledge of professional preservationist practices at the Federal level and across the country. Although Datel and Mikesell were involved in the rewrite, they were working off Boghosian’s proposals and drafts.

But getting the new ordinance adopted was not easy. It went through the usual public hearings, where it encountered accusations of being too “coercive” and “heavy-handed.” It was revised to meet these objections. In October, 1982 it went to the City Attorney for a final review. But, this person did nothing with it for almost a year. In exasperation, then Commission Chair Mikesell wrote the Mayor on September 9, 1983 pleading for action:

The written and verbal requests of the Commission have produced no tangible results. It seems to me that a reasonable review period has long been exceeded and that the City attorney has simply assigned a low priority to this task (Haig Collection, Box 4).

With this prodding, the new ordinance was “sprung,” and finally adopted on a 4-1 Council vote on February 22, 1984.

**Re-Certifying “Landmarks” as “Historical Resources,” Mid-1980s.** A listing of 140 structures in an “inventory” raises the question of which ones might be more important or more historic? How could one identify more important structures? The Federal program called the National Register of Historic Places was dedicated to answering exactly this question and had developed four criteria of significance that local preservationists could also use. A structure that met at least one criterion was historical. And, preservation professionals were, of course, the people trained to determine whether a structure met a criterion or not.

**IDENTIFICATION**

1. Common name: Hotel Apple/Mission Bldg

2. Historic name, if known: Terminal Hotel and Cafe

3. Street or road address: 220, 222, 224 E STREET

City: DAVIS ZIP: 95616 County: Yuba

4. Present name, if known: 220, 222, 224 E STREET Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_ Demographic:  Public  Private

5. Present use: BAR/RESTAURANT/HOTEL Original use: HOTEL/RESTAURANT

Other past uses: \_\_\_\_\_

**DESCRIPTION**

6. Briefly describe the present physical appearance of the site or structure and describe any major alterations from its original condition.

This two story flat-roofed brick building has a wooden gallery which covers the sidewalk at the ground floor level. On the end of the building facing a parking lot, is a porch of 2 street bays. The destruction of the Mission Revival welcoming arch. The building itself has been mostly changed over time. The building occupies a prominent corner site near the railroad station in the corner of the Davis downtown commercial area.

7. Approximate property size: \_\_\_\_\_

8. Condition: Check one

a. Excellent  b. Good  c. Fair

d. Poor  e. No longer in existence

9. Is the fabric: a. Altered?  b. Unaltered?

10. Surroundings: Check one (if one is checked)

a. Good land  b. Suburban building

c. Single lot use  d. Residential

e. Commercial  f. Industrial

g. Other

11. Threat to site:

a. None known  b. Private development

c. Zoning  d. Right-of-way project

e. Vandalism  f. Other

12. Date of exterior photograph: \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE: The following items (4-12) are for structures only.**

14. Primary exterior building material: a. Stone  b. Brick  c. Mason  d. Adobe  e. Wood

15. Is the structure: a. On its original site?  b. Moved?  c. Altered?

16. Year of initial construction: 1925 This date is: a. Actual  b. Estimated

17. Architect (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

18. Builder (if known): Shilman (son of Highway Construction Engineer)

19. Period feature: a. Bar  b. Carriage house  c. Outcrop  d. Shed  e. Fenced garden

f. Window  g. Watermark/land house  h. Other  i. None

**SIGNIFICANCE**

20. Briefly state historical and/or architectural importance. Include dates, events, and persons associated with the site when relevant.

The principal current importance of the Hotel Apple lies with its cultural contributions to the city rather than its architectural values. Although much altered, it does however contribute in scale and form to the few early downtown Davis structures still remaining. It particularly relates to the corner structures, the Anderson building, and the building which now houses the Paragon restaurant, and the Mission Hall down and across the street.

The Hotel Apple, originally known as the Terminal Hotel, was built in 1925 by George Hinger and James Melinda. Designed to be a "mass scale" hotel, it served as an overnight stop over for train travelers from the S.F. Depot nearby. At the time the hotel was built, as many as 18 trains a day were passing through Davis. Being close to the station, the hotel also served as the first home for many students and faculty newly arriving at the University.

The first owners wanted the hotel to serve the community as well as the itinerant traveler as many university and service organization meetings were held in the building. Today the Hotel Apple still serves its original purpose as a bar/restaurant/hotel.

21. Main theme of the historic resource: (Check only one) a. Architecture  b. Art & Culture  c. Science  d. Expansion/Extension  e. Government  f. Industry  g. Social center  h. Religion  i. Educational  j. Other

22. Sources: List books, documents, articles, personal interviews, and other items.

Building Permits

Interviews with George Hinger, Jane Eberle & Bob Durham Silverman, G.F., "Hotel Apple-Davis Landmark", Interim, March 15, 1976

23. Date form prepared: June 1979 By: Faye Le Clair-Research/Alta Sierra Environment

Address: 220 E St. City: Davis ZIP: 95616

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Organization: Davis Historical & Landmarks Commission

6. Survey form for the Terminal Building in the City of Davis Cultural Resources Inventory, 1980.

Datel and Mikesell also played important roles here. In order to make a structure a historical resource, someone had to (1) write a ten or so page document to be presented to the City Council that (2) asserted in some detail that a given structure met at least one of the criteria of significance. This in turn required doing some historical research. Datel and Mikesell were educated in doing such work and were adept at it. As well, they provided leadership for other members of their commissions in performing these tasks (Datel Files, 1980-86).

The first structures written up and put forth for the status of “designated historical resource” (a new phrase and category in the 1984 ordinance) were simply taken from old-timer lists of “Landmarks.” That is, the consolidated historic resource ordinance of 1984 involved, as a first matter, a re-certification as “historic resources” what were previously termed “landmarks.”

Between 1984 and 2002, this process of the City Council voting to make a structure a “designated historical resource” was successfully completed 34 times for properties within or near the 1917 city incorporation boundaries (Fig. 8 lists all of them). (Technically, it was 35 times because 623 Seventh was done twice). Thirty-four designations over 19 years averages to about two a year. This, though, is wildly misleading. The actual number of designations in a given year is given in Fig. 7. There we see that almost half of the 34 (16) took place in the first year— and all these were simply re-certified “landmarks.” Then the number drops off sharply, becoming zero in 1988 and remaining zero for a full decade.

#### 7. Number of “1917 City” Historical Resource Designations By Year, 1984-2002

Year	Number of Designations	Year	Number of Designations	Year	Number of Designations
'84	16	'88	0	'98	7
'85	2	'89	0	'99	1
'86	7	'90	0	'00	0
'87	1	'91	0	'01	0
		'92	0	'02	0
		'93	0		
		'94	0		
		'95	0		
		'96	0		
		'97	0		
	26		0		8

**Other Aspects of the 1978-87 Period.** Several additional aspects of the 1978-87 period of crisis and professionalization are notable.

**Failure to Designate the Terminal Building.** The building at Second and G streets that would eventually be demolished in 2000—the Terminal/Aggie hotel— was not one of the structures designated a landmark prior to the re-certification in 1984. Instead, it appeared on lists of possible landmark structures and was in the cultural resources inventory, but had not been finally included on any landmark list.

At the point of re-certifying the landmarks as historical resources, it was added to the list. Nomination appears to be accelerated in this way because the owner, Lee Chen, announced in early 1984 that he was going to demolish it. It was in reaction to this threat that the Commission then included the Terminal in the first batch rather than waiting until the next years when it moved to new structures.

In what might have been the first drawn out public conflict over designating a building a “historical resource,” the HRMC voted to recommend such designation to the City Council, but it failed to achieve Council approval on a three to two vote.

**Adaptive Reuse Begins.** Although not necessarily “preservationist” in a strict sense of complying with what preservationists call “the Secretary’s Standards,” in the late 1970s (and especially in 1979) and continuing into the 1980s, a number of projects developed “adaptive reuse” alternatives to “scrape off” demolition. Facilitated by zoning changes in the mid-1970s that encouraged converting residences into commercial structures rather than demolishing them, the following were among the larger of these new re-use projects:

- The Hunt-Boyer mansion was incorporated into the larger Mansion Square shopping complex at Second and E.
- With partners, Richard Berteaux converted two older houses at 125-137 E Street into commercial structures, added other buildings behind them, and integrated the set into a complex named Orange Court. Done in stages over several years, it was formally completed in April, 1979.
- Park Place at 216-224-228 D Street "combined [five] old houses and outbuildings with new construction . . . to house a complex of specialty shops, a restaurant and . . . [a] real estate office" (*Davis Enterprise*, March 24, 1978, November 2 and December 31, 1979)
- After several unsuccessful efforts to site a new and larger city hall, the school district's departure from its high school building at Russell and B opened the way for its purchase, rehabilitation, and formal opening as the new City Hall in May of 1981.
- Saunders Place at the northeast corner of Fourth and D streets was a complex of buildings reconstructed as the kind of faux Victorian structures that make preservationists cringe. But, they were charming in the eyes of others (as in, for example, the eyes of the *Davis Enterprise* on May 4, 1984).
- What might be called the Carrere-Harby complex consisted of the two converted houses at the Southeast corner of Fourth and D that was completed in 1982. The Carrere home was moved there from the Wells Fargo Bank site rather than demolished (*Davis Enterprise*, July 30, 1980, December 24, 1982).

**The Old High School Becomes City Hall, 1981.** The rapid growth of Davis meant the rapid growth of Davis government. The number of City staff greatly exceeded space available to accommodate them at the little city hall at Third and F. After a long and tortured search for a site and funding, the old high school at Fifth and B was (as just mentioned) bought from the school district and rehabilitated. With this, the City of Davis itself went into the historic preservation business.

**The Avenue of the Trees Protest, 1984.** This period experienced what might have been the first major episode of public outcry against anti-preservationist City actions.

The City Arborist and supporting "experts"—with the City Council going along—decided, in 1984, that 75 of the 260 Black Walnut trees in the Davis "Avenue of the Trees" had reached the end of their "useful lives" and should be cut down (*Davis Enterprise*, May 15, 1984).

This declaration led to numerous and packed public protest meetings and the marshalling of equally credible experts opposed to the cuttings and who testified that the trees were no where near the end of their useful lives and could be maintained.

At the time of this article, only a few of the 260 Black Walnuts in the Avenue of the Trees have ever been cut down. So, you know what happened.

[Expansion needed here on earlier work to save this stand of trees.]

**Second Printing of *Davisville '68*, 1980.** The first printing of 2,000 copies of *Davisville '68* was almost all sold by the late 1970s. In 1980, the City Council authorized a second printing of 1,500 copies for a printing cost of \$7,800.

**4. PERCOLATING QUIESCENCE, 1988-94.** The later 1980s and early 1990s were years of relative quiescence, at least with regard to the HRMC, which seemed to have moved into a rather "caretaker" mode. Further, looking over the Commission minutes of these years, one sees

more than a few meetings disbanded for “lack of a quorum” and meetings canceled for “lack of items.”

This, though, does not mean the period was without preservation and local history events. In fact, it was rather rich in them.



8. City of Davis Designated Historical Resources, 2002. An \* (asterisk) means an “Outstanding” as opposed to a mere “Historical Resource” (City of Davis HMRC).

There are 38 rather than 34 structures on this list because four are in the wider Davis area rather in or near the 1917 incorporating city limits of Davis.

\*Davis Subway (Richards Underpass) (Ord. 2003, 9/29/99)  
 221 First Street - A.J. Plant House (Ord. 1343, 1/8/86)  
 616 First Street - Boy Scout Cabin (Ord. 1282)  
 209 Second Street - Barovetto Home (Ord. 1363, 4/9/86)  
 209 1/2 Second Street - Barovetto Tank House (Ord. 1363, 4/9/86)  
 505 Second Street - H.J. Hamel House (Ord. 1291, 11/14/84) (National Register)  
 \*604 Second Street - Dresbach-Hunt-Boyer Home (Ord. 1282, 7/25/84)  
 \*616 Second Street - Varsity Theatre (Ord. 1930, 2/25/98)  
 716, 718, 720, 722, 724, 726 Second Street - Brinky Block (Ord. 1291)  
 \*840 Second Street - Southern Pacific Station/Davis Junction (Ord. 1282) (National Register)  
 232 Third Street - Eggleston Home (Ord. 1410, 1/7/87)  
 923 Third Street - The Montgomery House (Ordinance 1928, 2/25/98)  
 619 Fourth Street - First Presbyterian Manse (Ord. 1295)  
 \*623 Seventh Street - Anderson-Hamel House (Ord. 1355, 2/19/86) (Ord. 1929 2/25/98)  
 310 A Street - Asbill-Grieve House (Ord. 1364, 4/9/86)  
 232 B Street - Jacobson-Wilson House (Ord. 1295, 11/28/84)  
 337 B Street - McDonald House (Ord. 1360, 3/12/86)  
 137 C Street - Clancy House (Ord. 1334, 12/4/85)  
 \*412 C Street - Davis Community Church (Ord. 1282)  
 445 C Street - Old Davis Library (Ord. 1282)  
 602 D Street - the Grady House (Ord. 1954, 7/15/98)  
 648 D Street - (Ord. 1954, 7/15/98)  
 616 E Street - (Ord. 1954, 7/15/98)  
 \*226 F Street - Old Davis City Hall (Ord. 1282)  
 513 F Street - (Ord. 1954, 7/15/98)  
 619 F Street - (Ord. 1954, 7/15/98)  
 \*203 G Street - Anderson Bank Building (Ord. 1282)  
 225 G Street - Masonic Lodge (Ord. 1291)  
 301 G Street - Bank of Yolo (Ord. 1291)  
 \*320 I Street - Williams-Drummond-Rorvick House (Ord. 1282)  
 \*334 I Street - Schmeiser House (Ord. 1335, 12/4/85)  
 405 J Street - McBride Home (Ord. 1402, 12/3/86)  
 \*434 J Street - Joshua B. Tufts-Longview-Jones Home (Ord. 1282)  
 \*1140 Los Robles - Werner-Hamel House (Ord. 1282)  
 \*820 Pole Line Rd. - Davis Cemetery (Ord. 1282)  
 \*Russell Boulevard, West of Arthur Street - Avenue of the Trees (Ord. 1282)  
 \*23 Russell Boulevard - Davis City Offices (Ord. 1282)  
 \*277 Russell Boulevard - LaRue-Romani Home (Ord. 1282)

**The City Council Preserves Buildings.** In acquiring the old high school and converting it to a city hall in the late 1970s, the City started down the historic preservation road. In this period they traveled down it quite some distance.

**Southern Pacific Station Rehabilitation, 1980s.** As part of the Southern Pacific Railroad's divesting itself of its passenger facilities, the City of Davis came to own the 1913 "Mission-style" station at the intersection of Second and H streets. In work extending a decade, a million and a half (or more) dollars were spent on "restoring" or otherwise re-doing the building and its environs.

In view of the poverty the City so commonly pled about almost everything, one could ask how such a large project was possible. The answer is that staff were adroit grant writers and that the State or Federal government paid 85 percent or more (which is still a lot of City loose change) (*Davis Enterprise*, May 29, 1988).

The work was done in phases, the first major one of which was completed, in the official reckoning, on Saturday, June 4, 1988. There was an elaborate dedication ceremony that day, along with a downtown street faire and other celebration activities.

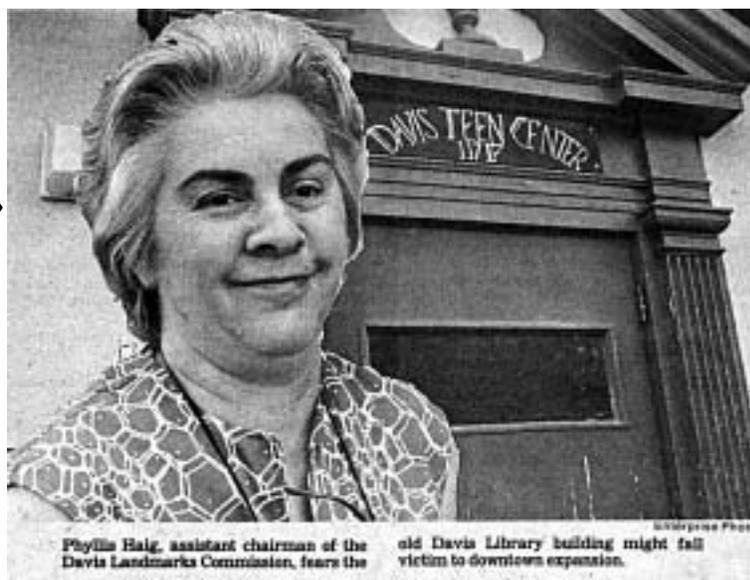
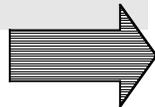
Work on the SP station was commonly spoken of as a "transportation enhancement" matter (as a "multi-modal" facility) rather than as a preservation effort. Even so, such a "saving" of the SP station had major preservationist import and meaning.

Indeed, one might claim it was one of the two or three most important preservation events in Davis history.

**From Old Library to Part-Time Museum, Late 1980s-Early 1990s.** In the late 1970s, City officials began to conceive the properties at and near the southwest corner of First and F streets as a site for a multi-story parking structure. A building constructed in 1911 as Davis' first public library stood on one of those properties. The library function was transferred to a new building (on Fourteenth Street) in 1968. The structure at 117 F fell into relative disuse and neglect. Officials began to think about demolition.

But, in the early 1980s, Phyllis Haig (Fig. 9), descendant of Davis pioneers and a major figure in Davis historical and preservationist matters proposed a different future: A Davis history museum. Backed by the Historical Commission and other groups, she campaigned to save it at that location or to move it.

9. Phyllis Haig, *Davis Enterprise*, May 10, 1979.



Petitioned almost continuously by Haig and others over several years, the City Council finally agreed to keep the building as a City-owned structure, but not entirely as a Museum. Instead, it would become a Parks and Recreation meeting facility that would also function, part-time, as a museum.

The building was moved four blocks northwest to Central Park (445 C) in August of 1988. Rehabilitated, it was dedicated as the Museum of Davis (although only partially that) in 1991. Subsequently (see below), the building was formally named the Hattie Weber Museum of Davis in honor of Harriet Elisha Weber (1872-1961), who ran the public library in it from 1910 to 1953. (Those who think “small world,” will appreciate knowing she was a daughter of George Augustus Weber and an aunt of John Weber Brinley.)

In 1993, the City contracted with “The Davis Library Club”—a group whose membership was restricted to female descendents of Davis pioneers—to run the Museum. This contract provided that the Club would operate a museum in exchange for being allowed to use the building for club meetings (that is, the contract did not involve the exchange of any money). (It was also cancellable by either party at any time.)

**Varsity Theater Leased and Renovated, Early 1990s.** In the late 1980s, the owners of the “Streamline Moderne” Varsity Theater on Second Street decided it was obsolete for showing motion pictures and closed it. As part of a then new economic development strategy for the downtown, the City took a 25-year lease on it in 1992 and, with significant cost overruns, spent more than \$800,000 renovating it.

Orchestrated by Council Member Dave Rosenberg, more than \$400,000 to pay these costs was raised by developer contributions. For example, one developer pledged \$240,000, which was \$800 for each house he built. Asked why almost all the donations were from developers, Rosenberg (ever the dead pan comic) said, “Money comes from developers because they are civic-minded” (*Davis Enterprise*, October 1, 1991).

**Hunt-Boyer Purchased, 1994.** When the Hunt-Boyer mansion was “saved” through redevelopment as “Mansion Square” in 1978, the lot was split, leaving the mansion on it’s own small plot. In 1994, its owner decided to sell it. Saying that it was desperate for more office space, the City bought it.

**Other City Preservation Activities.** In addition to getting into the historic rehabilitation business, the City engaged in some other local historic/historic preservation activities.

**The 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Davis Incorporation, 1992.** In mid-1991, the HMRC and city staff began planning the City’s 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of incorporation. Consisting of a year-long series of events, the actual “birthday party” was held outdoors in Central Park on the blessedly balmy day of Saturday, March 28. (The vote to incorporate took place on March 20, 1917.)

Among other performances in the seven-hour long celebration, Mayor Maynard Skinner arrived at noon on a “Highwheel bicycle followed by Skydance Skydivers descending into the park.” Not to be overshadowed, Council Member David Rosenberg roamed the scene on a rented horse. In a ceremony at 1:00 p.m., the meeting-museum building was formally named the Hattie Weber Museum of Davis.

One of the more striking aspects of the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary was the amount of attention given to it in the pages of the *Davis Enterprise*. In addition to abundant coverage in ordinary stories, the paper developed and printed a two part insert, called “Remembering Our Heritage,” containing a great many stories on aspects of Davis history (*Davis Enterprise*, March 22 and 23, 1992).

Separate from this, there was a six part series on “Davis historic homes,” as well as assorted other history stories over the year.

**The Second Davis History Book.** In 1988, the idea that Davis needed an updated book of history that reflected the marvelous new environmental and liberal Davis of the recent period found favor among members of the City Council. A request for proposals was issued, revised after being criticized as too narrow, and then reissued. Providing a stipend of \$10,000, to be taken largely from the Davis History Trust Fund, a writer was selected.

She began interviewing people for the history. Soon, word began circulating that this would-be historian lectured interviewees more than interviewed them and spent too much time giving her personal opinions on a many topics, including her negative views of current Council members. The critical reaction was so wide and strong that she resigned. A second author was recruited. But he posed a different kind of problem. He went years over the deadline to deliver the manuscript. Under the threat of having to return the portion of the stipend he had already been paid, he turned in a draft of his book in 1998. Quite well done, it focused on a few public policies, but generated little public reaction or interest when the draft was put on the City’s website. Still on that website, it has yet to proceed to hard copy publication.

**Citizen Campaigns.** Some of the percolating aspects of this period’s relative quiescence took the form of citizen resistance to City anti-preservation initiatives.

**The First Grassroots “Defended Neighborhood:” Old East Davis, 1988.** In the mid-1980s, the City Council began to think that perhaps the area bounded by the railroad, L Street, and Second and Fifth could be “redeveloped” with apartment buildings at much, much greater than existing population density.

This area happened also to contain a number of the oldest homes in Davis and residents attached to those homes and the neighborhood. Viewing the contemplated redevelopment as a threat, they invented the term “Old East Davis” and formed an association with that name. This area thus become Davis’ first (in sociological jargon) “defended neighborhood,” an area that is spurred into creating an identity for itself and to organize its residents because of external threats (Suttles, 1972, Ch. 2, “The Defended Neighborhood”).

For whatever reasons, the rather grandiose plans the Council had floated never moved forward. In the year 2002, Old East Davis still looked very much like it did in the mid-1980s. (And, there was a continuing Old East Davis Association, which is described below.)

[Clarification needed here on how the above effort was different from the activity in the University/Rice Lane area that resulted in Ordinance 1415 adopted February 4, 1987.]

**Subway II, 1988.** In 1988, the Council tried a second time to widen the Subway by seeking voter approval for a bond to finance the work. But, this matter was overshadowed by a concurrent controversy and public vote on the issue of building a freeway overpass at one rather than another location in far east Davis. The citizenry was almost evenly divided on the two locations, which aroused high emotions and intense campaigning on both sides. The consequence was rather little attention to the Subway bond one way or the other. It achieved 60% approval in the November balloting, but failed because two-thirds was required.

**Alley Paving Protest, 1991-92.** In the great impersonal workings of the Davis Department of Public Works, there was a list of what were called “capital improvement projects—which were changes in and upgrades to the City’s physical infrastructure. One of these projects, that hardly

anyone reviewed or paid attention to, was the cement paving of the six gravel-surfaced alleys in the Old North neighborhood of the city. This was scheduled to happen in 1992.

After she was evicted from her to-be-demolished home on Second Street, Julie Partstanky had moved four blocks north and lived in a house on one of those six alleys. In mid-1991, she learned of the impending paving of her alley and the other five.

With the help of dozens of residents in the neighborhood, she organized “stop the paving” petitions to the City Council. Under this citizen pressure and with Public Works Department surveys that showed most Old North people opposed paving, the City Council partially relented. The two of the alleys between G and F streets, which had the most commercial presence and traffic would be paved. The other four were re-graded and re-graveled (*Davis Enterprise*, January 9, 1992).

What makes this episode of special interest here is that Partansky enlisted the HRMC in the struggle and she and the Commission made “historical resource’ arguments for not paving. That is, gravel alleys were a part of the historical integrity of the Old North. While the concept of “integrity” had previously been applied to buildings, application to a feature of a neighborhood was novel even if not new. And, it opened the way to thinking about a “conservation district” later in the 1990s. (Some people of course tried to discredit this line of thought by charging that Partansky and the HMRC believed that one should preserve “historic potholes.” No one ever made such an argument, but it made a good “Davis is wacky” story in the national press.)

Paving or not paving was a major topic of public attention in the last months of 1991 and the early months of 1992. Partansky was clearly the major spokesperson for and the leader of the anti-pavers. Based on this, a number of people urged her to stand for City Council in the election to be held in June, 1992. She did and she won.

**5. RESSURGENCE AND REACTION, 1995–2002.** In the early 1990s, John Meyer, the new City Manager appointed in 1990, reorganized the Davis City government. In the process of shuffling the departmental homes of various activities, the HRMC was moved from the Planning Department, with a planner as Commission staff, to the Parks and Recreation Department, with two liberal arts trained people involved as Commission staff.

**The HRMC Moves Upscale.** In this new home, the HRMC was given a new and different identity. It was now a high-tone “cultural service,” rather than a low-tone and gritty land-use and building function. As if to stress the point, the Civic Arts Commission was right along side the HRMC in the City’s organizational chart. The staff person in charge would be titled the “Cultural Services Manager.”

The importance of this change is that the two young staff with HRMC responsibilities—Sophia Pagoulatos and Esther Polito—were trained in aspects of the arts, particularly in art history, not in planning or in preservation. However, they were sophisticated and cosmopolitan about cultural matters, believed in preservation, and were hard workers who learned quickly.

**The HRMC Becomes a Certified Local Government.** They began to educate themselves about preservation at the state and federal level and became acquainted with a new a program for historical commissions called the Certified Local Government (CLG). This Federal-State effort provided incentives to local governments to undertake preservation activities, especially “surveys of cultural resources.” A local jurisdiction agreed to appoint commissioners of certain qualifications and specialties and to require a number of hours of training per year in exchange

for which it was preferentially eligible for preservation-related grants. Financially, CLG membership would cost the City \$600 a year for the required training of commissioners.

Pagoulatos and Polito worked up the idea of joining. It was subsequently supported and sponsored by the HRMC, the Head of the Department of Parks and Recreation, and the City Manager, John Meyer. (Meyer was himself a preservation supporter and the owner-occupant of a house he seemed happy to see become a “historic resource” in 1998 [Fig. 8, 616 E Street]).

So sponsored, the City Council unanimously approved application for GLC membership on February 9, 1995. Julie Partansky, who was likely the strongest supporter of preservation ever elected to the Council, was in the second year of her first term. The then Mayor, David Rosenberg, was also a strong preservationist.

**Three Major Official Actions.** CLG membership opened the door to a resurgence of preservationist activities. Here are what I see as the three most important of these.

**The Second Cultural Resources Survey, 1996.** The HMRC and its staff right away parlayed their CLG preferential eligibility for funding into a \$15,000 grant for a consultant to conduct an update of the 1980 survey of cultural resources. By “right away,” I mean the Council unanimously approved application for the grant on May 24, 1995, less than three months after approving application for membership.

This second survey fielded some two dozen volunteer surveyors and was conducted and completed in 1996. It produced a document about as fat the first one but in fact much longer because the type was much smaller. This time it was titled *City of Davis Cultural Resources Inventory and Context Statement* (Architectural Resources Group, 1996).

The list of possibly historical structures was, of course, also longer than that of 1980. The enumeration reached farther from the original center of the town at Second and G streets and now included, in particular, many homes in the “Old North” area (the twelve blocks bounded by Fifth and Seventh and B and the railroad tracks). And it included all the houses in the area called “College Park.”

**Eight New Designations.** This expanded enumeration provided the basis for renewed effort to “designate” “historical resources.” Guided by the expertise of a new set of technically trained Commissioners, a fresh list of properties on which to work up “nominations” was prepared.

This fresh list importantly consisted of residences rather than other types of buildings. As one can see in Figs. 7 and 8, there would eventually be eight new designations, seven in 1998 and one in 1999. Six of the eight were residences. One of the other two was the Richards Underpass and the other was the Varsity Theater, a structure then considered obsolete for its original use, that of showing motion pictures.

Of importance, I think: There were no ordinary commercial buildings; the one commercial structure the HMRC actually got to the nomination phase—the Terminal Building—was turned down by the Council—a subject I examine in detail *Demolishing a Historic Hotel*.

But there was a phase previous to nomination. This was the phase in which Commissioners asked themselves if it made sense to try to work up a nomination. One major reason it would not make sense would be an owner’s already known opposition to preservation, combined with the importance of the owner’s business in Davis. Indeed, at least one key building on G Street never got near the point of nomination because Commissioners were well aware of this owner’s hatred of preservation.

Also at this time, Commissioners desired to nominate the Catholic Church at Fifth and C streets. Told of this desire, the owner said it did not want designation. Litigation and legislation pending at the time also clouded what was possible with religious structures. Time passed and the matter was not taken up again.

**Conservation District Design Guidelines, 2001.** Aside from issues of preservation, guidelines for design of new construction in the “core area” had been an issue for many years. Indeed, the matters of “design review” and “design guidelines” had become so contentious and seemingly subjective that one Council even abolished what was called the Design Review Commission. Deciding to ignore the problem did not, though, make it go away.

Hanging out there as a sore that became acutely inflamed on occasion, this long-standing problem of what to do about design opened the way for the HRMC to broach a modest solution. Perhaps one only needed design guidelines that applied to the “traditional” part of Davis (the 1917 incorporating area, the blocks bounded by A and L and First and Seventh streets).

The path in this direction had been opened in the Davis *Core Area Specific Plan* of 1996. That plan stipulated that “any design guidelines developed for the City shall contain special guidelines for the Core Area that will take into account its uniqueness and architectural heritage” (City of Davis, 1996, 14).

Applying and extending that requirement, the HRMC, the Planning Commission, and their respective staff joined in developing a plan “to hire a Design Guidelines consultant” who would conduct a series of public meetings to determine citizen desires and write up a draft booklet of guidelines. The “budget adjustment” for this was \$40,000. Again with the support of the City Manager and other key city staff, the Council unanimously approved the measure on April 4, 1999. At this time, Julie Partansky was the mayor.

Of key importance, the plan called for the creation of a “conservation district,” **not** a “preservation district” or a “historic district.” The idea was to create a zoning “overlay” area, not to engage in an entirely new zoning. This was done, HRMC and staff said clearly, because they doubted people in Davis would accept something as strong as a preservation or historic district. (These kinds of distinctions among districts are described in Terrell, 1996, 9-10.)

Bruce Race of RACESTUDIO was awarded the contract. He orchestrated public meetings to elicit resident views of their respective areas and worked with City planner Ken Hiatt and others to produce a draft. This draft was then the subject of several more public meetings.

I was a participant in this process and I attended almost all the public meetings. I was especially interested in the degree to which and ways in which there was public opposition to the Guidelines. To my surprise, I observed or knew of no one who publicly opposed them in principle and called for there being no guidelines. Instead, what little public opposition there was wanted only to change particular provisions. The strongest form of this selective opposition came from architects, who feared that their creative talents would be stifled by a strict reading of the guidelines. But, this was not opposition to the Guidelines per se. (And architects were assured they would not be stifled.)

On the other side, residents who came to the meetings—perhaps two hundred people taken over all the meetings—were quite enthusiastic and evidenced great pride about living in “traditional Davis.”

But still, the very absence of wholesale opposition to the Guidelines in principle made me nervous. This was because in a number of private conversations I sensed people did not much like the idea of the constraints of the Guidelines, but felt reluctant to say so. In the “People’s Republic of Liberal Davis,” it was not politically correct to be against historic preservation. One was anyway, but embarrassed to say so. I therefore worried that there was a dammed up reservoir of anti-preservationist sentiment that a catalytic event might release. (The outcome of the Davis City Council election of March, 2002 and events following from it suggested that my fears were not baseless.)

Be that as it may, with two Council members not allowed to vote because they owned property in the “1917 city,” the Guidelines were adopted by a unanimous vote of the other three on August 1, 2001. (One of these three said, though, that she did not really like the Guidelines, but would not stand in the way of what seemed to be a well negotiated and democratically arrived at plan.)

**Subway III, 1996-97.** The above describes Davis preservationist activity dominated by government. But preservation obviously also has other sources and actors; namely, grassroots citizen action. The 1995-2002 period also had important episodes so animated.

Recall that the City Council of 1973 wanted to widen the Richards Underpass but the financing plan was defeated (Subway I, 1973). Then, in Subway II, 1988, a bond issue failed with 60% voting in favor, but two thirds needed for adoption.

In a three to two vote, the Council of 1996 voted to widen the Subway using other than bond financing. But, the two dissenting Council members—Julie Partansky and Stan Forbes—were strongly opposed and sparked a citizen referendum to overturn the Council’s decision. Vigorous campaigning by a coalition called SMART (Save Money and Reduce Taxes) triumphed in a special election held in March, 1997 (44% yes, 56% no).

As I said before, while there was a preservationist element in this contest, anti-tax sentiment was likely the stronger force. Nonetheless preservationist values were also clearly evident in the campaign “conversation.”

**A New Flurry of Local History.** [to be written: new local history products in this period. (Enterprise, *Those Who Make Memories*, Jackman CD and performances, my studies, other?).]

**Old East Davis Celebrations, 1998- --.** Starting in 1998, the Old East Davis Association each Fall held a day-long “Old East Davis Neighborhood Celebration.” Several streets were blocked off, bands performed, walking and house tours were conducted, a history contest held, ceremonies celebrated, the year’s Grand Marshal (an old-time resident) spoke about the neighborhood, dignitaries welcomed everyone, and, in general, a good time was had by all.

The publically sponsored atmosphere was that of a party, but the underlying message was dead serious: We are organized and ready to respond to threats to our neighborhood. As it has developed in Davis and in the United States in general, historic preservation has become heavily a government program. But in Old East Davis we saw historic preservation of a different kind with a different basis: grassroots residents acting on their own for their own neighborhood interests. Such indigenous initiative is so rare that one cannot but be inspired when one encounters an instance of it.

**Terminal Building Demolition, 2000.** [Description to be written.]

**An Aside: The City as the Major Figure in Historic Buildings.** Given the City of Davis' reluctance to spend money on local history and preservation, it is ironic that, by the year 2002, it had wound up being the major owner or controller of Davis historic buildings.

These were: (1) the Old Davis High School remodeled into a City Hall (late 1970s); (2) the Southern Pacific Rail station (1980s); (3) the old library remodeled into a meet-room/museum (1980s-90s); (4) the Hunt-Boyer Mansion (1994); (5) the long-term lease on and remodel of the Varsity Theater (1990s), (6) The old City Hall, originally the only building the City owned; and, (7) the Boy Scout Cabin, on which the City had a lease to buy the land from UC Davis, giving it operational if not "on paper" ownership.



[Highly Tentative Conclusion Text, likely to be radically revised or deleted: The loss of the Terminal Building in 2000 combined with the adoption of the *Design Guidelines* in 2001 brought to a close yet another period of preservationist activity. The turning of the tide was clearly evidenced in the City Council election of March, 2002. Two rapid growth candidates heavily financed by developer contributions replaced two more liberal incumbents.

One of the first acts of the now conservative majority was to consider immediate firing of every member of the Planning Commission. The reason appeared to be that too many of them were not disposed to give developers a sufficiently free hand. Instead, the majority too often voted for good planning and design.

The Commission only escaped immediate purge because the new dominant three could not agree among themselves on exactly how to carry it out. This new climate chilled preservation in Davis.]

Finally, let me characterize local history and historic preservation activities taken overall in the history of Davis. Surveying this sweep of 39 years, I think we would have to say that both activities were most of the time rather fragile and, sometimes, marginal. The values each represented have almost always been precarious.

The dominant public mood, though, was not active and open hostility. Instead, it seemed more often masked skepticism, apathy, and foot dragging, with occasional and grudging support, along with rare flashes of mass enthusiasm.

[More on waxing and waning of both local history and historic preservation.]

[More on the difference between "grassroots" and "mainstream" or elite efforts regarding both local history and historic preservation.]

### **Draft of the Acknowledgements.**

The historical account I offer here would be much, much less full and accurate if Phyllis Haig had not been a participant in almost all of the history itself and had not saved almost every document she acquired along the way. Moreover, she made extensive handwritten notes on documents that flushed out various accounts. She was extraordinarily generous in allowing me to review the contents of eight storage boxes containing these documents covering the 1960s through the 1980s. For this generosity, I am very deeply in her debt.

Robin Datel saved her files from the period she was active as a historical commissioner and very kindly loaned them to me for this research. Thanks, Robin.

I greatly appreciate Esther Polito talking with me in detail about the 1995-2002 period and doing me the very great favor of looking up many of the dates and votes regarding it.

Desiring to clear clutter out of its printing plant, in the year 2000 Davis Enterprise Editor Debbie Davis gave me eighty-five bound volumes of the *Davis Enterprise* covering the late 1960s through the early 1980s. Together with the Hattie Weber Museum's Hubert Heitman collection of original *Enterprises* covering the 1960s, I have had a unique and unfettered access to a detailed chronicle of Davis history that has enormously assisted this research. My thanks to Debbie Davis for thinking of me and to Cynthia Gerber, who rescued the Heitman Collection from a landfill fate and donated it to the Hattie Weber Museum of Davis.

Lyn H. Lofland edited this draft and I thank her very much.

---

References are not included in this draft. They can be found, however, in the references to *Demolishing a Historic Hotel*, from which most of the foregoing text is extracted.

8/24/06