

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED OCT 25 1979 JAN 2 1980
DATE ENTEREDSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Wilson House

AND/OR COMMON

RECEIVED

JUL 23 1979

OHP

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 860 University

CITY, TOWN

Palo Alto

STATE

California

VICINITY OF

CODE 06

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

12

COUNTY

Santa Clara

CODE

085

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC☒ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

☐ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☒ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☐ PARK☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Mr. & Mrs. N. John Di Cicco

STREET & NUMBER

860 University

CITY, TOWN

Palo Alto

VICINITY OF

STATE

California

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Santa Clara County Clerk's Office

STREET & NUMBER

191 North First Street

CITY, TOWN

San Jose

STATE

California

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Palo Alto City Inventory

DATE

December 1978

☐ FEDERAL ☒ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☒ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Office of Historic Preservation

CITY, TOWN

Sacramento

STATE

California

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

☒ EXCELLENT
☐ GOOD
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED
☐ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED
☒ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The residence at 860 University is a freestanding structure located on a major street originally occupied by upper middle class residences on generous suburban lots. In recent years, there has been some encroachment of multiple unit housing, but the general quality of a well landscaped suburban streetscape still survives.

The building is a rectangle in plan, and two and a half stories in height. Of wood frame construction, its upper and lower stories are differentiated by changes in their wooden surface texture; the upper floor is sheathed in narrow clapboard siding, the lower one in a much wider clapboard.

The roof is hipped, with a slight flare near the eaves, and in the center of each side is a low dormer, also hipped.

There is a one story verandah which completely enfronts the house, and wraps around both sides. A wide, shallow flight of steps leads to the verandah, and this entry point is marked by a low gable with relief ornament including a shield and floral motifs. The verandah rail is composed of turned balusters of classical derivation, and the porch is supported on simple columns with out capitals. The roof of the verandah rests directly upon the turned column tops without a lintel or other visible horizontal beam, a very unusual configuration. At the south west end, the verandah has been glassed in, perhaps in the 1930's. The enclosure was done with small panes of glass in wooden frames, and is not unsympathetic to the original design.

The windows of the major ground floor rooms each have a fixed top panel of clear leaded glass; the pattern is a highly stylized and abstract floral composition. Similar patterns occupy the transom and sidelights of the entrance.

On the northeastern side of the house the purely cubic form is interrupted by two curved bay windows. One of these projects from the lower floor only, but the other, a stair-well window, is one and a half stories in height, and contains art glass of elaborate design. The central panel is a scenic design with waterfall, done in a naturalistic mode. The window utilizes unique colors and their combinations associated at that time with Tiffany Studios, and may be their, as yet unverified, product. Gas lamps and outlets remain throughout the house.

At the rear of the property is a two story stable/carriage house, now used as a garage. It is a simple rectangle in form, with a crossed gable roof, and a central louvered vent. A small rectangular wood frame gardener cottage stands at the southern most corner of the property. It is an undecorated, utilitarian, structure of apparently the same vintage as the house.

The structure stands amid rather extensive grounds, the ample space around the structure adding a certain sense of restrained opulence to the complex.

Alterations consist of the addition of a rear sun porch in the 1930's and the enclosure of one portion of the front porch to serve as a sun porch also probably in the 1930's. The rear addition is not visible from the street. The front porch enclosure has been carefully executed in keeping with the design of the structure and has not affected original portions of the house itself. At some future time, it could be relatively easily removed.

(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

Outbuildings on the Wilson Property:

Garage:

The garage is a two story, wood frame structure, with a gabled roof, sheathed in horizontal siding. A second story gable placed in the middle of the building faces the rear of the house. Three large doors provide access to the interior stalls. A small gable roofs the vent that stands on the gable ridge.

Small garage:

A small one story wood frame garage, also surfaced in horizontal siding, stands immediately adjacent to the larger garage building.

Shed or Cottage:

A small one story shed with gabled roof, horizontal siding and no decoration stands in the southeast corner of the property, adjacent to the garages.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
PREHISTORIC	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	☐ COMMUNITY PLANNING	☐ LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	☐ RELIGION
1400-1499	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	☐ CONSERVATION	☐ LAW	☐ SCIENCE
1500-1599	☐ AGRICULTURE	☐ ECONOMICS	☐ LITERATURE	☐ SCULPTURE
1600-1699	☒ ARCHITECTURE	☐ EDUCATION	☐ MILITARY	☐ SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
1700-1799	☐ ART	☐ ENGINEERING	☐ MUSIC	☐ THEATER
1800-1899	☐ COMMERCE	☐ EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	☐ PHILOSOPHY	☐ TRANSPORTATION
1900-	☐ COMMUNICATIONS	☐ INDUSTRY	☐ POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	☐ OTHER (SPECIFY)
		☐ INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES	1906	BUILDER/ARCHITECT	Mr. Peck
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Carl Wilson Residence owes its significance primarily to its architectural excellence and its high quality as a representative of its style, type, and era.

The design of the Colonial Revival house is not unusual in general form, but the structure becomes architecturally noteworthy due to its large and impressive overall scale and some particularly outstanding details. It is this quality and use of scale in particular, that lends presence to the house and establishes the importance of its design.

A marked horizontal emphasis is created by the broad rather overscaled porch, and the extended eaves of the upper story. The porch roof gives the appearance of hovering above the ground and thus provides a broad visual base for the upper portion of the house.

The form and articulation of the porch roof and its means of support are rather unusual. This emphatically planar element is interrupted by a shallow decorated gable at the entrance. The porch canopy itself is supported by recessed columns without capitals, and with its shallow fascia, becomes a thin horizontal plane that appears to almost float above the ground.

A particularly fine piece of detailing is an unusual rounded bay with elaborate stained glass windows. Almost two stories in height, it is, in terms of size, shape and quality among the finest residential example of its era in Palo Alto. The design is complex, the colors striking, and the rounded forms dictated by the bay are both unusual and difficult to execute. The workmanship is particularly well done.

The expansive proportions and design quality of the house, together with its impressive setting in the midst of a large landscaped garden, gives the structure considerable presence. Additionally, the small complex created by the house, garden, and still-intact carriage house at the rear convey an important sense of time and place.

The structure is currently surrounded by newer construction and remains an important vestige of an impressive early 20th century neighborhood.

The Carl Wilson House is also a fine representative of a version of the Colonial Revival style utilized widely in Palo Alto approximately between 1895 and 1915. The structure serves as a kind of prototype or epitome of one of the city's most characteristic versions of this style.

Such Colonial Revival styling appears particularly frequently in the area of the city known as Professorville where structures vary in their interpretation of the style; some borrow and employ characteristic details, while others adopt the basic forms and vary their materials and

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Interview: Mrs. Lewis Palmer, May 1979.
Interview: John Di Cicco, May 1979.
Reference: Anne Witherspoon, February 1979.
Interview: Mrs. John Di Cicco, May 1979.
Palo Alto Historical Society Archives; Palo Alto Public Library
City Directory, 1910.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

UTM NOT VERIFIED

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .522

QUADRANGLE NAME Palo Alto

QUADRANGLE SCALE 7½'

UTM REFERENCES

A 10 574 870 4145 250

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

A predominantly rectangular shaped lot 125' by 200' with a small section (70' by 32') deleted from the rear. Lot is part of a residential block bounded by University, Seneca, Hamilton, and Guinda streets.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE
no overlapping boundaries

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Paula Boghosian & John Beach

ORGANIZATION

Historic Environment Consultants

DATE

May 31, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

2805 Jc St.

TELEPHONE

(916) 446-2447

CITY OR TOWN

Sacramento

STATE

California

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Kenneth M. Allen

TITLE

DATE

10/19/79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

1-2-80

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

DATE

1-2-80

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

FHR-8-300A

(11/78)

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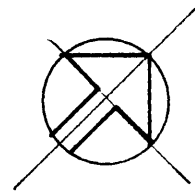
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET

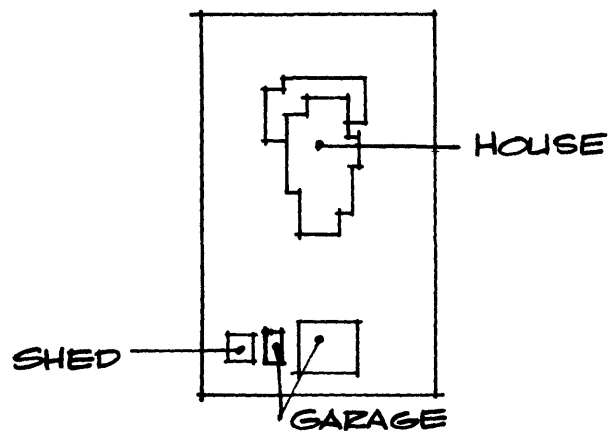
ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 1

composition. As such, the Wilson House served both as a model for the style's many interpretations, and as a product itself of the mode. It is important architecturally, both for its high design quality, and as a finely detailed "super" version of its style and type.



UNIVERSITY AVE.



WILSON RESIDENCE

SCALE: 1" = 100'

FROM SANBORN INSURANCE MAP - 9/1979

PALO ALTO

COUNTY

MATEO

C.R.

SAN FRANCISCO

SAN

APPROX. (BORN)

PALO

ALTO

LYTTON

AVE.

SENECA

UNIVERSITY PARK

AV.

UNIVERSITY

AV.

HAMILTON

GUINDA

ST.

360 UNIVERSITY

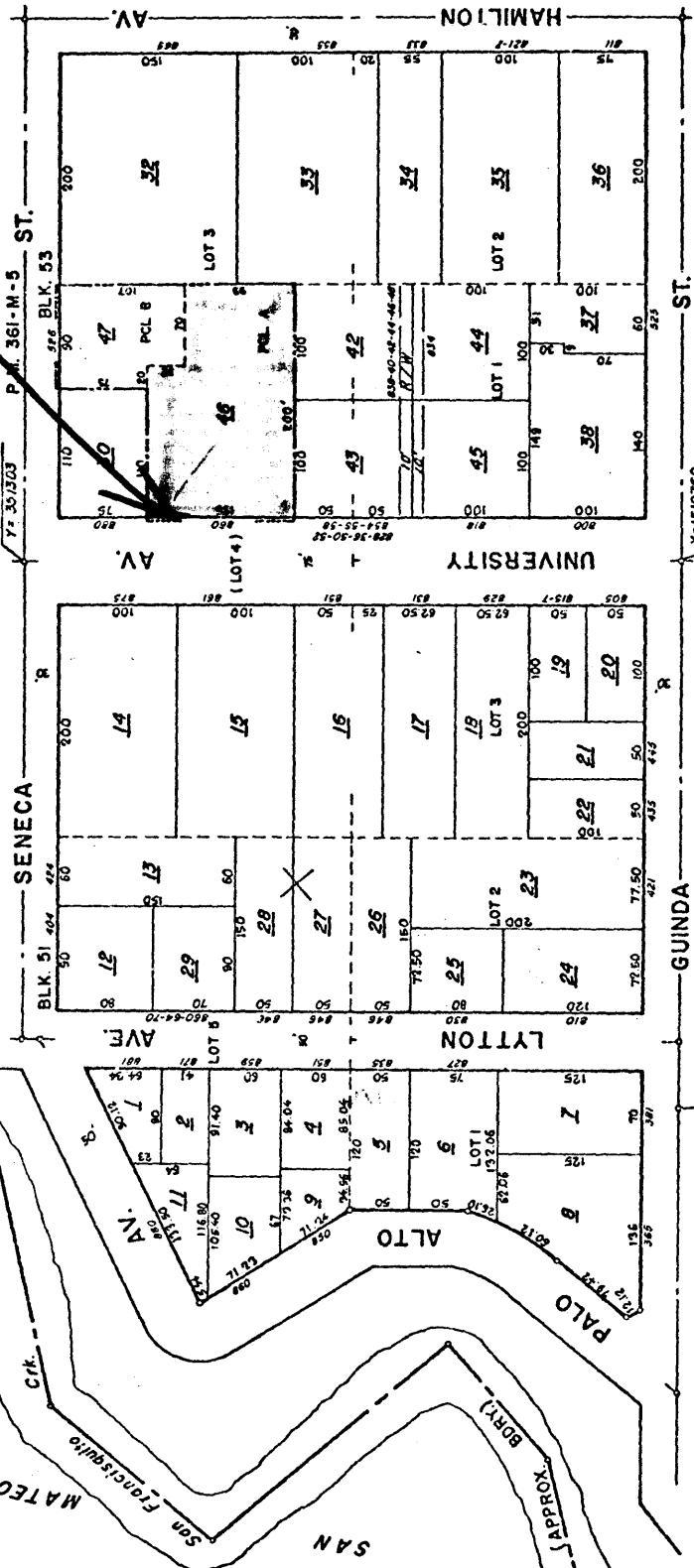
4

2

1

31

1" = 100'



BLK. 51 404

P.M. 361-M-5 ST.

BLK. 53

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Wilson House

860 University, Palo Alto, Santa Clara Co., CA

Paula Boghosian

1979

2306 J St., Sacramento, CA

OCT 25 1979

View to SE; house

1 of 3

JAN 2 1980

DOE



OCT 25 1979

Wilson House

860 University, Palo Alto, Santa Clara, Co.,

Paula Boghosian

1979

2306 J St., Sacramento, CA

View to NE; house

2 of 3

DOE

JAN 2 1980



Wilson House

860 University, Palo Alto, Santa Clara Co., CA

Paula Boghosian

1979 OCT 25 1979

2306 J St., Sacramento, CA

View to S; stained glass window bay

3 of 3

pde

JAN 2, 1980