NPS Form 10-900
OMB No. 1024-0018

682

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

RECEIVED 2280
AUG 21 2015
Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Offerman, John, House
Other names/site number: 1018 Main Street
Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing

2. Location

Street & number: 1018 Main Street
City or town: Redwood City State: CA County: San Mateo
Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___**national** ___**statewide** X **local**

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X **A** ___**B** X **C** ___**D**

18 August 2015

Julianne Polanco/State Historic Preservation Officer **Date**

California State Office of Historic Preservation

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: **Date**

Title : **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

✓ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

Joe Edson H. Beall 10·5·15

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private: [x]

Public – Local [ ]

Public – State [ ]

Public – Federal [ ]

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s) [x]

District [ ]

Site [ ]

Structure [ ]

Object [ ]

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use
Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
COMMERCE/specialty store

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)
MID-19TH CENTURY/Greek Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: Wood

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph
Built circa 1857 and remodeled and enlarged in the 1870s, the John Offerman House is the oldest building remaining in downtown Redwood City. The dwelling is located at 1018 Main Street, one block from the downtown's historic commercial center. The Offerman House is a well-preserved example of a Folk Greek Revival-style dwelling. The original circa 1857 building, its underlying construction unchanged, was originally a simple plank-frame, front-gable, two-story, four-room house clad in board-and-batten siding. It is an example of a once common vernacular house type built by early Anglo American settlers in California. Reflecting Redwood City's evolution into a thriving commercial community, the original dwelling was enlarged with a one-story, hip-roofed addition to the rear circa 1871. A Greek Revival porch that wraps around three sides of the building was added around the same time. Other Greek Revival features added circa 1871 include the porch's pierced Doric capitals, octagonal exterior newel posts, and paneled door and side and transom lights. Painted rustic channel siding, also added circa 1871, sheathes the entire building. On the south side of the house is a small sunroom/sleeping porch designed in the Craftsman style, added after 1919. Within the interior, the dimensions of the original circa 1857 building are clearly indicated by rough-sawn, wide-plank flooring in the parlor. Other interior features, such as faux-grained casework, decorative Lincrusta friezes, and redwood wainscoting are refinements characteristic of the circa 1871 remodel. The Offerman House was restored in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards in 1974. The house retains outstanding integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. It does not retain integrity of setting. The busy commercial and civic environment surrounding the Offerman House is of a much different scale and character than the delicate Victorian-era dwelling.

Narrative Description

Introduction

Built circa 1857, enlarged and remodeled circa 1871 and circa 1920, saved from demolition and restored according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards in 1974, the Offerman House is the oldest building in Redwood City's historic downtown and one of only two in the entire city that survive from the city's earliest period as a pioneer lumber port.[1] Named for the locally prominent family that owned it from 1889 to 1973, the Offerman House is located at 1018 Main Street, one block from Redwood City's locally listed Commercial Center Historic District.

Site

The site of the Offerman House contributes to its authenticity of feeling. A large gnarled pepper tree, probably planted at the time of the circa 1871 addition/remodel, frames the southwest corner of the house, and several other large trees, including a Canary palm and a Norfolk pine, shade the south side of the property. The white stick-work fence separating the site from the sidewalk along Main Street is original to the period, though not to this property. The fence originally stood on "Holmgrove," the Donohoe estate, in Menlo Park, later the site of Menlo-Atherton High School. Bordering the Offerman House to the south is an informal garden planted with roses, perennials, and annuals characteristic of a Victorian era California garden. Recipient of several Redwood City Beautification Awards, the garden surrounds a brick patio built in the 1980s of bricks salvaged from several local sites. The Offerman House shares the patio and the garden with the 1890s Dielman House, a well preserved Queen Anne-style cottage that was moved onto the site in 1979 to save it from demolition. A separate National Register application will be submitted for the Dielman House at 1020 Main Street. Though part of the same landholding, the Dielmann House occupies a separate lot.

Setting

To the north of the Offerman House is the Redwood City Public Library's Parking Lot A. Between this parking lot and the library housed in an expanded 1921 firehouse at 1044 Middlefield Road (originally Redwood City Fire Station #1) is a small landscaped greensward called Roselli Mini Park. It occupies the former channel of Redwood Creek that was placed underground in a culvert in the 1970s. Adjoining the subject property to the south is a nondescript condominium building constructed circa 1980 and Caltrain's Peninsula Corridor railroad tracks that run parallel to Pennsylvania Avenue. To the east of the subject property, on the opposite side of Main Street, are several low-rise commercial buildings dating to the early twentieth century. East of Main Street, Redwood City's downtown street grid shifts in orientation where it adjoins the Eastern Addition neighborhood. Continuing one block north along Main Street, one enters Redwood City's downtown, where one- and two-story masonry commercial buildings from the early twentieth century alternate with much larger mixed-use projects constructed in the late

[1] The other is the Finger House, at 90 Finger Avenue. Built in 1854, it is likely the oldest house in Redwood City.

twentieth and early twenty first centuries. To the northwest of the Offerman House, straddling Middlefield Road, is Redwood City's Civic Center. The Civic Center is anchored by Redwood City Hall on the north side of Middlefield Road and Redwood City Public Library on the south side.

Plank-frame Construction

The Offerman House is notable as a well-preserved example of the Folk Greek Revival style, particularly as it was interpreted in the first decade or so following the American conquest of California in 1848. As originally built circa 1857, the Offerman House was a simple, two-story, gable-front, plank-frame building measuring 20' by 25' in plan. It contained only four rooms, with a parlor and a dining room/kitchen on the first floor and two bedrooms upstairs. The building was quite primitive because it did not have a conventional post-and-beam frame. Instead, it had a "plank-frame" building, meaning that its vertical redwood sheathing largely supported its floors and roof. The vertical gaps between the redwood planks would have been covered in thin wood strips, or "battens."[2] This form of construction was prevalent in California and other parts of the West during the 1850s and 1860s because dimensioned lumber was comparatively scarce and expensive and skilled labor was in short supply. In contrast, plank frame buildings were comparatively easy and cheap to build, especially given Northern California's once-abundant stands of large redwoods that could be milled down into wide planks. Though not as durable as a traditional post-and-beam building, plank framing was suitable to California's temperate climate, where heavy snow loads were of little concern. Over time, as inexpensive balloon framing replaced post-and-beam construction, many of California's pioneer plank-frame buildings were replaced or allowed to fall down.

Folk Greek Revival Style

Rendered in a simplified version of the nationally popular Greek Revival style, the Offerman House is considered to be a folk or vernacular version of the style because its simple gable front and pierced Doric columns are distantly derived from the pedimented form of ancient Greek temples. The Greek Revival style was "the dominant style of American domestic architecture" from about 1830 to 1860—so popular that it was called "the National Style."[3] Typically much more widespread in the older Anglo American settlements of the Midwest and the Northeast, the Greek Revival style was briefly popular during the earliest phase of Anglo American settlement in California. Early photographs of Redwood City show several dozen front-gabled Folk Greek Revival-style buildings similar to the Offerman House. Aside from the Offerman House, none of these earliest downtown dwellings from the 1850s survive.[4] Though re-clad in

[2] According to the State of California Historic Resources Inventory Form, dated June 1976, Ted Moulton, the architect who designed the 1974 restoration, saw evidence of board-and-batten construction when he removed sections of the rustic channel siding.

[3] Virginia Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Knopf, 2013), 250-2.

[4] There are only five dwellings dating from the nineteenth century in downtown Redwood City: the Offerman House at 1018 Main Street (1857), the Dielmann House at 1020 Main Street (circa 1892), a circa 1880 house at 620 Jefferson Avenue, a circa 1890 Queen Anne cottage at 611 Middlefield Road, and the Lathrop House at 627 Hamilton Street (1863, moved 1905).

redwood rustic channel siding in the 1870s, its original proportions and detailing are still easily discernible.

Exterior Description: Original Circa 1857 Dwelling

The Offerman House appears largely as it was remodeled and enlarged in the early 1870s. The original two-story, front-gabled building, constructed circa 1857, is surrounded on three sides by a 6'-deep porch with decorative supporting columns and railings. The porch is accessed from Main Street by a short flight of wood stairs flanked by octagonal newel posts. The flat columns that support the porch feature pierced capitals that are based on the Greek Doric order. The porch railings have a decorative balustrade consisting of wood balusters arranged in large "X" formations with vertical webbing between them. The porch is capped by a narrow frieze and a shallow-pitched shed roof supported by exposed rafters. The porch emphasizes the symmetry of the dwelling's primary façade and conceals the circa 1871 addition from view of the street. Without the porch, the addition that extends several feet south of the original building would have disrupted the dwelling's classical symmetry.

The porch served multiple functions—aesthetic, stylistic, practical, and symbolic. Its strong horizontal line counterbalances the front gable's vertical proportions. Most importantly, from an aesthetic perspective the porch emphasizes and preserves the original house's symmetry, an essential feature of the Greek Revival style. In addition to its aesthetic functions, the porch contributes importantly to the house's social transformation from mere shelter into a middle class family residence. While respecting the house's fundamental style, the porch added to its breadth and thus its visual impact, making a statement of modest prosperity. Functionally, the added breadth creates a transitional space that protects the house from sun and rain, and also permits the family to gather comfortably outdoors. The porch also suggests an openness to engaging with the community—an invitation to social contact, adding to the house an architectural feature that served an important social function in American housing well into the twentieth century.

The first floor level of the east (primary) façade of the circa 1857 section of the Offerman House is fenestrated with four tall, double-hung, wood windows with a glazing pattern of two lights-over-two lights (two-over-two). The windows are trimmed with simple wood casings and capped by a thin crown molding. At the right side of the primary façade is a paneled wood door flanked by narrow sidelights and capped by a transom. On the second floor level of the primary façade, two smaller, two-over-two, double-hung, wood windows extend into the gable. The secondary façade faces south toward the landscaped courtyard between the Offerman House and the Dielman House. It is articulated at the first floor level by a pair of large double-hung, wood windows that match the primary façade. The second floor level has two rectangular casement windows centered above the first floor windows. The tertiary façade faces north toward a narrow driveway running along the north property line. This façade is articulated by one double-hung, wood window at the rear of the porch, at the first floor level. The rest of the north façade is windowless, in part because the stair runs along the north wall of the interior.

The upper level of the north façade has a small, inconspicuous bump-out added circa 1974 to conceal several plumbing vents. The west façade of the circa 1857 section is largely concealed behind the circa 1871 addition. Visible above the roof of the addition on the west side is a pair of small double-hung, wood windows within the gable. All four façades of the original circa 1857 dwelling are clad in redwood rustic channel siding added circa 1871. The east and west façades both terminate in a simple wood frieze and a molded raking cornice and the north and south façades terminate in simple moldings at the lower part of the eaves. Vertical corner boards wrap around all four corners of the building.

Exterior Description: Circa 1871 Addition

The circa 1871 hipped-roof addition has small double-hung and casement-sash windows variously placed around its roughly L-shaped perimeter. The visible portion of its east façade that faces the front porch, has one double-hung, two-over-two, wood window. Its north façade is massed as two sections, with the bedroom wing abutting the circa 1857 dwelling articulated by one double-hung, two-over-two, wood window and a small casement window set within the upper portion of the wall. The north façade of the kitchen wing features just one small, double-hung, one-over-one, wood window. The west façade that faces the rear parking lot has a shallow oriel composed of three casement sashes containing diamond-shaped lights. This window, probably added circa 1920 when the sunroom/sleeping porch was built, is sheltered beneath a small pent roof. The south façade of the circa 1871 addition is partly concealed behind the circa 1920 sunroom/sleeping porch addition, though a small section is exposed near where the addition adjoins the circa 1857 building. This area is articulated by one pair of double-hung, two-over-two, wood windows. A narrow trim board conceals the joint between the original dwelling and the circa 1871 addition. A wood stair flanked by octagonal newel posts provides access to the porch in this location. Like the circa 1857 building, the circa 1871 addition is clad in redwood rustic channel siding. It terminates with a simple board frieze and enclosed eaves.

Exterior Description: Circa 1920 Addition

Extending southward into the patio from the circa 1871 addition is the sunroom/sleeping porch addition, built circa 1920. This addition, which does not appear on the 1919 Sanborn maps and does on the 1950 Sanborns, is clad in redwood rustic channel siding that matches the rest of the house. It is capped by a shallow-pitched shed roof supported by exposed rafter ends in the Craftsman style, providing evidence for its origin in the early 1920s, the later years of the Craftsman period. An additional Craftsman feature is the continuous band of three-paned casement windows that can open to create an open-air sleeping porch

Bracketed wooden shelves, added after the 1974 Woodhams purchase of the property, are attached to the south façade of this addition.[5] The main entrance to the commercial space on the first floor of the Offerman House is provided through a pair of French doors on the east

[5] Email correspondence with Judith Collas, February 11, 2015.

façade of the circa 1920 addition. The addition is fenestrated with multi-light, wood windows that wrap around its exterior, admitting light and air to the interior. Behind the circa 1920 addition is a porch that was enclosed after the 1974 ownership change.[6] Originally open to the elements, this enclosed porch is now used for storage. It retains its original wooden balusters and framing that were left exposed on the outside of the building, presumably for a decorative purpose.

Interior Description

The interior of the Offerman House is unusually intact, offering a rare window into life in a rustic pioneer dwelling in Victorian-era California. The front door facing Main Street opens into a narrow hallway with stairs leading up to the second floor on the right. Doors on the left side of the hall lead into the parlor in the original building. A door at the far (west) end of the hall opens into the circa 1871 addition. The door to the immediate left of the entrance provides access to the former parlor at the front of the house. Now a single front room, the space was originally divided equally into two smaller rooms, each with independent access to the hall. The supporting beam that marks the original division between the rooms is covered by a soffit that curves down at each end to rest on decorative brackets. At the juncture of the walls and the ceiling is a narrow crown molding, below which is a Lincrusta frieze embossed in a brown-toned Victorian-era pattern.[7] This frieze extends across both faces of the soffit. Twelve-inch high baseboards visually balance the frieze near the floor. The front room is lit by over 7'-high windows that extend from just above the floor to just below the ceiling—two on the east wall and two on the south wall. The casework, doors, and baseboards are faux-grained redwood, a decorative feature carried out in the rooms of the addition, indicating that it likely dates to the circa 1871 remodel. Rough-sawn redwood plank flooring, with individual planks measuring up to 20" wide, marks the floorplan of the original circa 1857 house.

Between the original house and the addition is a wall with a wide opening containing a pair of French doors. Past this wall the flooring changes to smooth-milled narrow boards, marking the beginning of the circa 1871 addition. The main room of this addition probably served as the dining room because it is located between the parlor and the kitchen. The room has two 7'-hight windows, like the front room, here positioned side-by-side instead of spaced apart. Decorative trim in the dining room includes picture moldings and redwood tongue-and-groove wainscoting. The faux graining on the casework is original to circa 1871. The painted wainscoting was stripped down to bare wood in the 1974 restoration. A door on the south side of the dining room opens into an entry vestibule with access to the sunroom/sleeping porch.

[6] Email correspondence with Judith Collas, February 11, 2015.

[7] Lincrusta is a deeply embossed wallcovering made of linseed oil and fine saw dust spread onto a paper base. The material is then rolled with a drum imprinted with the pattern. Designed to look like tooled leather or finely detailed plaster work, Lincrusta is frequently used in Victorian domestic and commercial architecture.

Opposite the entrance to the porch is a door leading from the dining room into a small hallway, off of which are the circa 1871 addition's two bedrooms. The hall and the two bedrooms have plain, double-hung, wood windows and faux-grained doors and casework. Behind the dining room is a large kitchen/pantry area that, aside from some older 1920s-era sheet flooring, retains few older features. To the rear of the sunroom/sleeping porch is the porch that was enclosed after 1974. Between it and the sunroom/sleeping porch is the rear tradesmen's entrance to the house. Originally the house had a small lavatory near this back door. The lavatory was remodeled in 1974 to open into the commercial area.

Returning to the circa 1857 building, the second floor level is reached by stairs from the front door at the east end of the hall. The stairs, banister, and railing on the upper landing are all original to at least the circa 1871 remodel. The low height of the banister and the railings, as well as the low clearance above the stairs, suggest that people in mid-nineteenth century America were shorter on average than people in the twenty-first century. The stairs lead to a landing and a hallway at the top of the stairs, off of which are two small bedrooms. These bedrooms have minimal headroom due to the steeply sloping roof. Each room has a horizontal band of casement windows below the sloped-ceiling/wall juncture and a double-hung window on the gable-end wall. The hallway ends at a bathroom, also with a sloped ceiling and a double-hung window within the front gable. The bathroom has painted wainscoting and a Victorian-era claw-footed bathtub. A small double-hung window on the rear wall of the landing offers a good view of the intersecting hip roofs of the circa 1871 addition. Building permits indicate the house was re-roofed with wood shingles, the historic material, in 2007.

Integrity

The Offerman House is remarkably well-preserved. The dwelling evolved incrementally over a period of approximately 65 years, beginning with the construction of the original four-room dwelling circa 1857. This building was nearly tripled in size with the construction of an L-shaped addition containing a dining room, kitchen, and two bedrooms circa 1871. This alteration also included the construction of a porch wrapping around three sides of the original house, and the recladding of the entire building in rustic channel siding. After 1920, a sunroom/sleeping porch was added on the south side of the circa 1871 addition. In 1974, after the Woodhams family purchased the property, they reinforced the foundation, added central heating and improved the building's electrical and plumbing systems. Additional alterations made by the Woodhams family after 1974 were done to comply with Redwood City codes and to prepare the building for commercial usage. Changes included the installation of wood shelving on the south façade of the sunroom/sleeping porch, the enclosure of the small rear porch, reorientation of the bathroom to serve the commercial space, and the construction of a small bump-out on the north wall to enclose the new vent stack. Aside from several freestanding partition walls that do not touch the walls of the house, installed to display artwork without harming the original interior finishes, no other discernable alterations have been made to the dwelling since 1974.

The National Register recognizes seven aspects, or qualities, that in various combinations, define integrity. To retain integrity, a property must possess several, and usually most of the following aspects that include location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Location:
The Offerman House retains integrity of location because it has never been moved.

Design:
The Offerman House retains integrity of design because it has not been substantially altered since the end of the period of significance. The dwelling's design derives both from its original circa 1857 construction and from its expansion/remodel circa 1871. The only subsequent substantial change is the construction of a small sunroom/sleeping porch circa 1920. Several minor changes were made in 1974, none of which detract from the original design.

Setting:
The Offerman House does not retain integrity of setting. The subject property and its surroundings have been changed significantly over time. Though aesthetically compatible, the addition of the Dielman House and the Victorian garden between the two buildings in the 1970s created a later pattern of development that did not originally characterize the property. The adjoining properties have also drastically changed, with large surface parking lots and large residential and commercial projects taking the place of the smaller-scaled, nineteenth century residential and commercial buildings that long characterized the southern edge of downtown Redwood City. Finally, Redwood Creek, which historically defined the western boundary of the property, was undergrounded in the 1970s.

Materials:
The Offerman House retains integrity of materials because it retains the vast majority of its original exterior and interior fabric. The Woodhams family replaced very little historic fabric after they bought the Offerman House in 1974, repairing damaged materials and features wherever possible. The building is highly unusual in that it retains nearly all of its original Victorian era interior features and materials.

Workmanship:
The Offerman House retains integrity of workmanship. Though it is a simple vernacular building, the building does include examples of craftsmanship, including the complicated wood joinery on the porch columns and balustrades, octagonal newel posts, and interior features such as faux graining.

Feeling:

The Offerman House retains integrity of feeling. Precisely because it retains so many of its original materials, design features, and period landscaping, the Offerman House is a true physical embodiment of Victorian era domestic design and construction from the earliest phase of Anglo American settlement in California. Unlike many dwellings of this era that have been overzealously restored and/or reconstructed, the Offerman House stands essentially unaltered.

Association:

The Offerman House retains integrity of association because it looks the way it did when it was owned by the Offerman family, the longest owner of the property (1889-1973).

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- [x] A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- [ ] B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- [x] C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- [ ] D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark “x” in all the boxes that apply.)

- [ ] A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- [ ] B. Removed from its original location
- [ ] C. A birthplace or grave
- [ ] D. A cemetery
- [ ] E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- [ ] F. A commemorative property
- [ ] G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)
Architecture
Exploration/Settlement
Community Planning/Development

Period of Significance
1857-1964

Significant Dates
1857
1871
1889

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder
Unknown

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Offerman House is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at the local level under Criterion A in the areas of Exploration/Settlement and Community Planning and Development. Built less than a decade after the American conquest of California, the Offerman House is a rare survivor from the earliest period of Anglo American settlement of Redwood City and San Mateo County. The Offerman House was expanded and remodeled in the early 1870s concurrent with Redwood City's evolution from a pioneer lumber settlement to the county seat of San Mateo County. Under Criterion A the period of significance spans from 1857, when the front portion of the building was built, to 1964 when Redwood City began planning to demolish most of its historic downtown. The house is also eligible at the local level under Criterion C as an unusual and well-preserved example of the Folk Greek Revival style. The Greek Revival style was the dominant style of American housing during the first half of the nineteenth century and the form was brought west by Anglo American immigrants to California during the early years of statehood. Two periods of significance under Criterion C reflect both the original construction in 1857 and the expansion/remodel in 1871. In 1974, the Offerman House narrowly avoided destruction and was subsequently restored by the Woodhams family, founding members of Redwood City's preservation community.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Foundation of Redwood City

Prior to California statehood in 1850, what later became Redwood City was part of *Rancho de las Pulgas*, a Spanish land grant held since 1795 by the Argüello family and later confirmed by the Mexican government in 1835. The Gold Rush brought in a tremendous influx of European and Anglo American immigrants to California. Many of the newcomers openly challenged the validity of Spanish and Mexican land grants and squatted on the *ranchos*. In 1850, American lumbermen engaged in logging the Peninsula's redwood forests to provide lumber for rapidly growing San Francisco discovered a deep-water channel on the Argüellos' land between the Santa Cruz Mountains and San Francisco Bay. They quickly built wharves, and soon the logs, instead of being hauled laboriously overland, were hauled the shorter distance down the eastern slope of the Santa Cruz Mountains to the slough that would become known as Redwood Creek. From there, lumber could be easily transported to San Francisco by water, thus greatly increasing the supply of redwood lumber to the fast-growing metropolis.[8]

[8] Archives Committee of the Redwood City Public Library, *Redwood City: A Hometown History* (Belmont, CA: Star Publishing Co., 2007), xxi.

The area around the wharves soon accommodated a settlement of several hundred workers employed in the port's lumber and shipping industries, as well as other post-Gold Rush opportunists. Nearly all were squatters hoping to claim land for free under the aegis of American sovereignty. In 1853, Mrs. Soledad Argüello engaged the lawyer Simon Mezes to help her establish legal title to *Rancho de las Pulgas*, which he succeeded in doing in 1854, taking the case all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. As compensation for his efforts, Mezes was awarded three-twentieths of the *Rancho*. Whether as part of his compensation or by purchase from the Argüellos, Mezes gained title to much of the land that now comprises Redwood City. In 1854, Mezes surveyed the land around the unnamed redwood port along the mouth of Redwood Creek and mapped a town that he called Mezesville. Mezes required all squatters in the area to buy the land they occupied or leave. Though many complied, lingering hostility toward Mezes ensured that local residents would never call the town Mezesville, instead using the colloquial and descriptive name of Redwood City. Nonetheless, the Mezesville survey became the nucleus of Redwood City, comprising the city's downtown and a large rectangular area to the northwest.[9] The survey's eastern boundary was Main Street that lay on the east bank of Redwood Creek, including the future site of the Offerman House.

Construction of the house: 1857

In a deed recorded December 2, 1857, Soledad Argüello and Simon Mezes conveyed to George Heller, for the sum of $300, Lots 41, 42, 43, and 44 on Main Street.[10] These lots appear on the Official Map of Mezesville filed in 1854 at the San Mateo County Recorder's Office **(Figure 1)**. The legal description of the property: "Lot 43, the southerly 10 feet of Lot 44, and the northerly 43 feet 4 inches of Lot 42 of Mezesville Main Street Lots," seems to indicate that before Heller acquired the property, someone already occupied the land and had established boundaries to a landholding that predated Mezes' map. Therefore it seems almost certain that George Heller purchased the land from an unnamed squatter. A substantial early citizen of Redwood City, Heller traded many parcels of land, while running a livery stable on Main Street, near the budding commercial center of the settlement. Regardless of whoever first occupied the property, its legal description is significant in illustrating the way Mezes' map accommodated pre-existing land uses, while establishing a plan by which the town would continue to grow. In 1858, Heller sold Lot 44 to the north, minus its southerly 10 feet that remain part of the Offerman property. The lot to the south, Lot 41 plus a sliver of Lot 42, remained part of the subject property until at least 1880.

The commonly accepted date of construction for the Offerman House is 1857. This date is based on the aforementioned deed from Argüello and Mezes to Heller. There was certainly a dwelling on the lot by 1858 because the county property assessment of 1858-59 describes the

[9] Archives Committee of the Redwood City Public Library, *Redwood City: A Hometown History* (Belmont, CA: Star Publishing Co., 2007), xxi.
[10] San Mateo County Recorder's Office, Book 1 of Deeds, 246.

property as a farm containing a house and several outbuildings.[11] As built circa 1857, the Offerman House was originally a front-gable, two-story, four-room wood-frame dwelling with board-and-batten siding and rough-sawn wide-plank flooring. Though photographs of the property from the nineteenth century have not survived, physical evidence from the 1974 restoration indicates that the exterior was originally covered in board-and-batten siding.

Folk Greek Revival Style

Called the Folk Greek Revival style for its builders' naïve application of Greek classical architecture, the vernacular style is characterized by front-facing gables roughly proportioned to resemble a classical Greek temple front. Other Greek features often include a molded entablature (sometimes continuous and occasionally broken), Doric or Ionic pilasters and/or columns, and elaborate entrances flanked by sidelights and/or transoms. The Greek Revival form symbolized America's search for a national style that reflected the country's democratic aspirations as embodied by ancient Greece. The style was also popular for its overt rejection of English precedent, which had guided America's architectural output for centuries. The style's simple lines proved relatively easy for unsophisticated builders to replicate, especially after the publication of several popular builders' handbooks that contained detailed drawings of various architectural details. By the time California became a state in 1850, the Greek Revival style had already swept the Northeast and the Upper Midwest during the 1820s and 1830s.[12] The style was brought west with settlers from these regions during the Gold Rush. Though the Greek Revival style was nearing the end of its popularity in the East, it remained popular in California into the early 1870s. Though there are fully evolved examples of the Greek Revival style in state, for the most part, builders simplified the style to its essence, often omitting colonnades, roof-top balustrades, and other difficult-to-build features in favor of a frontier simplicity that was easy to build using relatively rudimentary tools and materials.

Edward Hancock Purchased the House: 1860

On September 18, 1860, Mr. Heller sold the subject property, including the adjoining lot to the south, to Edward Hancock, an important businessman in Redwood City.[13] Besides dealing in real estate, including the platting of Hancock's Addition in 1862, Edward Hancock served as Postmaster of Redwood City. He also owned the American Hotel on Main Street at Broadway, where he hosted political gatherings that shaped early San Mateo County government. It seems likely that in these early years the house served as lodging for workers in the local lumber and shipping industries, not as Heller or Hancock's primary residence. It was also located near the wharves of Redwood Creek, where most local men obtained their livelihoods. At that time the house consisted of only four rooms, at least two of which were bedrooms.

[11] San Mateo County Assessor's Office.
[12] Virginia Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Knopf, 2013), 250-2.
[13] San Mateo County Recorder's Office, Book 2 of Deeds, 286.

Growth and Prosperity in Redwood City: 1856-1880

In 1856, not long before the house was built, San Mateo County split off from San Francisco County. Located roughly midway between San Francisco and San Jose, and as the only significant settlement on the San Francisco Peninsula, Redwood City was chosen as the new county seat. In 1863, the San Francisco-San Jose Railroad was completed, with the tracks running just one block south and west of the house. The railroad drastically improved access from San Francisco and spurred population growth in and around Redwood City, especially estate development in the surrounding areas of Belmont, Fair Oaks (later Atherton), and Menlo Park. As the county seat, Redwood City became a trade center for the mid-Peninsula area and the economy began to diversify away from materials extraction toward trade and commerce. By 1867, the residents of Redwood City, looking ahead to a future of continued growth, petitioned county authorities to incorporate. In 1868, Redwood City became San Mateo County's first incorporated city.

Following incorporation, Redwood City's population nearly doubled, growing from 727 in 1870 to 1,383 in 1880.[14] Many of the new residents operated businesses in Redwood City's growing downtown. On the blocks extending outward from the commercial center at Main Street and A Street (later Broadway), businesses, including grocery stores, livery stables, saloons, dry goods stores, and laundries, replaced many of the pioneer dwellings built by and for lumber workers. To accommodate the growing population, land speculators platted new residential tracts adjacent to the old Mezesville plat, including Diller's Addition and the Eastern Addition. The Eastern Addition was a sprawling residential tract established east of Main Street, across the street from the Offerman House. Houses that went up in this part of Redwood City tended to be larger than the older pioneer dwellings in old Redwood City, with many homeowners asserting their middle class status with expensive houses designed in new architectural styles. While the Greek Revival style continued to be employed, by the mid-1880s the San Francisco Stick and Queen Anne styles had begun to supplant it. These styles, which stood out from their more modest predecessors, depended on the widespread availability of mass-produced redwood ornament produced in local mills. Often excessively ornate, California's late Victorian design earned the state the reputation as having some of the most ebullient domestic architecture in the United States.

House Expanded: Circa 1871

Reflecting Redwood City's transformation from a rough lumber port inhabited mainly by men into a growing community of middle class merchant families, the Offerman House was itself transformed during the 1870s, not long after Redwood City became the county seat. In 1871, Edward Hancock sold the property, which included Lots 41, 42, 43, and part of Lot 44, to Harvey

[14] Archives Committee of the Redwood City Public Library, *Redwood City: A Hometown History* (Belmont, CA: Star Publishing Co., 2007), 68.

N. Bishop, a butcher.[15] Because they lived at the property, it is likely that it was the Bishop family that enlarged the simple four-room house into a family home, nearly tripling its footprint with a one-story, hipped-roof addition comprising two additional bedrooms, a dining room, and a kitchen. The house's enlarged footprint first appears on the Sanborn Fire Insurance maps of 1884, the first map series published for Redwood City. The maps illustrate the original two-story dwelling with an L-shaped addition at the rear **(Figure 2)**. Though the front porch does not appear on the 1884 Sanborn maps, none of the neighboring houses were shown to have porches either, suggesting that they were omitted from the maps. In addition, the 1884 Sanborn maps do not show any other buildings on the subject property, though there was probably an outhouse and a stable, as mentioned on the 1858-59 assessment. The area surrounding the property featured several dwellings, a hay barn, a grain and feed store, and a narrow footbridge providing access from Main Street to Jefferson Street over Redwood Creek. Bishop's butcher shop can be seen next-door on Lot 41 to the south. The east side of Main Street opposite the subject property, which was in the Eastern Addition, featured a Chinese laundry, stables, and several commercial buildings.

On January 15, 1876, Harvey Bishop sold the house to Andrew Nelson for $3,500.[16] Nelson, also a butcher, died of tuberculosis in 1877.[17] Three years later, in 1880, his widow Margaret Nelson sold Lot 41 with the butcher shop to settle a debt, retaining the house and its grounds, including Lot 43 and part of Lots 42 and 44.[18] The 1888 Sanborn maps show additional buildings on Lot 41 and include the notation, "Smoke House and kettles used for pork packing in winter only. Premises tidy." The 1888 Sanborn maps also show several changes to the property from the 1884 maps. Though the footprint of the house appears the same on both maps, the 1888 maps depict the Greek Revival porch wrapping around three sides of the 1857 dwelling, as well as an open-air porch at the rear of the addition. The maps also show the property's diminished boundaries following the sale of Lot 41, as well as a fence and several outbuildings, including a shed, a stable, and a hen house **(Figure 3)**.

Offerman Family: 1866-1968

Born in 1840 in Bremervoerde, Germany, John Offerman immigrated to the United States as a young man, arriving in San Francisco around 1862. In 1866, he moved to Redwood City and joined Gevert Plumb in running a grocery store in the Eureka Saloon, on the southwest corner of Broadway and Main Street–the "Old Eureka Corner." In 1869, John Offerman purchased the Armory Building adjacent to the Old Eureka Corner from Edward Hancock, and in 1870, perhaps drawing upon traditions of his native land, Offerman, still in partnership with Plumb, established the Eureka Brewery, converting the Armory building for this purpose. The Eureka

[15] "Redwood City Real Estate," Richard Schellens Archive, Karl A. Vollmayer Local History Room, Redwood City Public Library.
[16] San Mateo County Recorder's Office, Book of Deeds 25, 573.
[17] *San Mateo County Times-Gazette* (January 15, 1876).
[18] San Mateo County Recorder's Office, Book of Deeds 32, 394.

Brewery, for several years the only brewery in San Mateo County, provided a popular product for more than 30 years, until the building burned in a fire in 1904.[19]

John Offerman, however, sold his interests in the brewery enterprise after only three years and moved on to politics and civic service. In 1873, he was elected County Treasurer on the Democratic ticket and served two terms. Meanwhile, as Redwood City's population increased, he profited by buying and selling real estate. In 1872, he bought the store building known as the "Old Brick Corner" at Main Street and Phelps Street (later Middlefield Road) along with three dwellings and a Chinese Wash House, presumably rentals, on Phelps Street adjacent to the store. He also participated in various other business ventures such as the Redwood City & Pescadero Stage Company, a stagecoach line established in 1874 to transport passengers and goods from the Redwood City railway station, over the Santa Cruz Mountains, to the ocean side of the Peninsula.

In 1880, John Offerman resumed his career as a grocer, this time in partnership with his brother, Claus Henry (usually referred to as Henry) Offerman. An announcement in the *San Mateo County Times-Gazette* attests to his character and prominence in the community, as well as the importance of his merchandise:

> Ex-County Treasurer John H. Offerman, known to every man and woman in the county as the most accommodating and obliging man in town, has stuck a stake in Redwood City. In company with his brother, Henry, he has reopened the old red brick store, at the corner of Main and Phelps [now Middlefield] streets, which he has stocked with a complete assortment of groceries, provisions, hardware, crockery, glassware, boots and shoes, mens [*sic*] and boys clothing, wines, liquors and cigars.[20]

In 1883, John Offerman married Johanna Gartelmann, also a German immigrant. On April 6, 1889, the Offermans, now a family with four daughters, bought the subject property at 1018 Main Street. The property, conveniently located just across the intersection from their store on Main Street, included Lot 43 and parts of Lots 42 and 44. The price was $3,000 in gold coin.[21] John Offerman and his family were now neighbors to Claus Henry Offerman, who in 1887 had bought Lot 45, two doors up from the John Offerman House on Main Street.[22] In 1890, both Offerman brothers bought shares in the new Bank of San Mateo County, whose primary line was providing loans to families to buy or build houses. These activities suggest that the Offerman families, the neighborhood, and the community were rising in prosperity.

[19] "John Offerman," Richard Schellens Archive, Karl A. Vollmayer Local History Room, Redwood City Public Library.
[20] Ibid.
[21] *San Mateo County Times-Gazette* (April 6, 1889).
[22] San Mateo County Recorder's Office, Book of Deeds 42, 325.

By 1891, Sanborn maps indicate that John Offerman had built a windmill, an outhouse, and a water tank house on his property. Across the street he had replaced the two rental houses and the Chinese Wash House on Phelps Street with two new houses and a duplex **(Figure 4)**.[23]

When John Offerman died of pneumonia in 1902 at age 62, his estate included $2,589.56 and personal property including a "Gasoline engine and pump, Household furniture and piano, Two horses and about two dozen chickens, ducks, etc [*sic*] and farm and garden tools, seven store wagons, one buggy, one surrey, and one phaeton," as well as five shares of the capital stock of the Bank of San Mateo County.[24] Besides his home and business property, he owned four other lots in Redwood City, including a lot north of Henry Offerman's house on Main Street, and several acres on the San Francisco Road in Santa Clara County.[25] As appropriate for a man of his status, John Offerman was buried in the historic Union Cemetery.[26]

In 1903, Mrs. Offerman rented the grocery business to Albert von Hofen from San Francisco, and within a year, her daughter Emma Offerman, who had managed the store after her father's death, married Albert Von Hofen. Mrs. Offerman and her three unmarried daughters, Annie, Bertha, and Viola, continued to live in the Offerman House for the rest of their lives.[27]

The San Francisco Earthquake of April 18, 1906 shook up the Offerman family along with the rest of Redwood City. Though the Offerman House apparently survived the earthquake without significant damage, the old red brick store, built in 1865, lost its upper story. The Offermans, along with the rest of the town, quickly rallied. On May 10, 1906, less than a month after the disaster, the *San Mateo Times-Gazette* reported that "Mrs. Offerman has cleared the ground and will at once erect a two-story frame building in the corner of Main and Stambaugh [sic] to take the place of the old brick corner that was wrecked."[28] During construction the Offermans moved the grocery business to temporary quarters adjacent to their property, probably the former butcher shop on Lot 41 to the south.

By 1907, the saloon and grocery had resumed business in the new wood-frame, stucco commercial building built on the site of the Old Brick Corner. The 1907 Sanborn maps illustrate the partially recovered neighborhood, including the Offerman House **(Figure 5)**. The 1907 map shows no more water tank house, which may have been wrecked by the earthquake or pulled down when the house was supplied with municipal water. The outhouse had apparently been converted to a shed, suggesting that the property was hooked up to city sewers. The 1907 Sanborn maps show five other sheds on the subject property. The only changes to the house

[23] Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Maps, 1888 and 1891.
[24] San Mateo County Recorder's Office, "Last Will and Testament of John H. Offerman."
[25] San Mateo County Recorder's Office, Book of Deeds 110, 426-7.
[26] "John Offerman," Richard Schellens Archive, Karl A. Vollmayer Local History Room, Redwood City Public Library.
[27] Ibid.
[28] *San Mateo Times-Gazette* (May 10, 1906).

included the infilling of a rear porch on the addition. This porch was converted into a bathroom, serving as additional proof that the property received indoor plumbing around this time.

Despite the full recovery of the Offerman family's situation and the reconstruction of damage in Redwood City after the 1906 Earthquake, the future was uncertain. A strong anti-saloon movement in Redwood City led in 1918 to an ordinance banning the sale and distribution of alcohol, one year before Prohibition took effect nationally. As a result, in 1919 the Offermans closed their saloon/grocery and rented the building to other merchants. This was the first time since the 1860s that there was no Offerman-owned business operating in downtown Redwood City. According to the 1919 Sanborn maps, the Offerman property remained essentially unchanged since 1907 **(Figure 6)**. After 1919, the Offerman family built a small sunroom/sleeping porch on the south wall of the circa 1871 addition. No building permit survives for this addition and it does not appear on the 1919 Sanborn maps. It does share some characteristics with the contemporaneous Craftsman style, including the exposed rafter ends and casement windows, suggesting that it was built in the 1920s.

Johanna Offerman died in Redwood City in 1938, aged 85. The last of the four Offerman daughters, Viola Offerman, died in 1968 at the age of 80. On December 19, 1968, Viola's will left the property, along with the store building across the street and the Middlefield Road property that John Offerman had bought nearly a century before, to her nephew, Malcolm Von Hofen.[29]

Evolution of Downtown Redwood City: 1906-1964

Redwood City grew steadily during its first half-century of existence. As was the case with many San Francisco Bay Area communities, the 1906 Earthquake launched Redwood City into a new era of new population growth and development. Although the Offermans resumed business as usual, the community itself changed. In 1912, the rather grand Sequoia Hotel rose on the site of the Old Eureka Corner, where John Offerman had made his start in Redwood City in 1866. Throughout the downtown larger new buildings replaced the old buildings damaged by the Earthquake. Whereas for the first fifty years of its existence the Offermans and their house kept pace with the development of the community, after the earthquake the house became increasingly a relic of the past. From a forward-looking perspective, however, the Offerman House, because of its location on the periphery of the commercial center, became a witness to significant patterns of community development as the status of the residential neighborhood declined, and the balance of land use shifted toward commercial usage.

Redwood City's population doubled from 2,700 in 1910 to 5,500 in 1920, as families left San Francisco for the suburbs, by then an easy commute by train. Most of these new residents chose to settle west of El Camino Real in the new subdivisions being carved out of ranches and former estates. No longer fashionable, the residential areas around the commercial center

[29] San Mateo County Recorder's Office, Book of Deeds 5574, 485.

gradually declined.[30] As middle-class people left Redwood City's downtown, most of the remaining single family dwellings were converted into businesses or demolished and replaced with new commercial buildings. Comparisons of the 1919 and 1950 Sanborn maps **(Figure 7)** reveal strikingly different land use patterns in downtown Redwood City. On the earlier maps there were still more than a dozen single-family dwellings along Main Street between the railroad tracks on Pennsylvania Avenue and Broadway. In many cases, these dwelling were interwoven amongst commercial buildings, including butcher shops, bakeries, hotels, laundries, dry goods stores, and theaters. By 1950, aside from the Offerman House, every single family dwelling on Main Street had been demolished or moved to make way for a commercial block.

To the west of the Offerman House, on the opposite bank of Redwood Creek, Redwood City's burgeoning Civic Center gradually took shape. Public use of this property began with a school built in 1863 on a raised area called Diller's Island. The school was accessed from Main Street via School House Lane, a plank walkway that bridged the creek and the adjoining marshland. The school boasted a gymnasium, the first in San Mateo County. When this school closed in 1897, the gymnasium was enlarged and remodeled into the New Pavilion, a building accommodating community functions. After the 1906 Earthquake, the New Pavilion was converted into a temporary courthouse with an attached records vault while the permanent courthouse was repaired. To provide improved access to the area, the City extended Phelps Street (later Middlefield Road) across Main Street and Redwood Creek on a concrete bridge to Jefferson Street. In 1912, Redwood City built its first Town Hall on this new street. As the city grew, other civic buildings followed. In 1921, the City built a state-of-the-art firehouse on the south side of Phelps Street. The new Redwood City Library and City Hall–both WPA Projects–were completed in 1939 in this same area that by the 1930s had been renamed Middlefield Road.[31]

In 1936, the heirs of Claus H. Offerman–John's brother–sold the property north of the Offerman House (later the Redwood City Public Library parking lot) to the Gilmore Oil Company. In 1939, an investor bought this property, as well as the house just north of the Offerman House, and cleared the site to build a two-story commercial building. Similarly, south of the Offerman House, the Hynding property was divided between heirs in 1921 and the portion with the house sold in 1926. The house was later removed to its location at 446 Heller Street. In 1952, an automobile dealership on the opposite side of Main Street bought the former Hynding property for auto storage, adding the lot next to the Offerman House to the parking lot in 1957. By 1950, the Offerman House was the only single-family residence remaining on Main Street in downtown Redwood City. The rental units on Middlefield Road that John Offerman built around 1890 still stood, but not for long. When the buildings were demolished in the mid-1960s the *Redwood City Tribune* ran a photograph of the last-standing doomed "landmark," quoting Miss

[30] City of Redwood City, *Redwood City General Plan Historic Resources Background Report* (Redwood City, CA: 2008), 8.
[31] Ibid.

Viola Offerman's lament that the house had no termites and "the wood is just as good as new."[32]

Redwood City's population increased dramatically following World War II, growing from 12,400 in 1940, to 25,000 in 1950, and 46,300 in 1960. This growth had mostly occurred south and west of El Camino Real, draining the city's historic center of much of its commercial vitality as most of the new residents abandoned downtown for new shopping centers on the suburban periphery. Downtown gradually decayed as businesses closed and buildings were no longer maintained. Seeking to arrest the decline, in 1964 Redwood City planners proposed to redevelop the downtown by demolishing virtually every building and replace them all with modern department stores and mid-rise office buildings. Though funds for this drastic redevelopment project never materialized, the expansion of the San Mateo County complex destroyed most of the historic residential area north of Broadway. Properties not displaced for new County buildings were cleared for surface parking lots and speculative office buildings housing law firms and bail bondsmen. Meanwhile, the two main shopping streets of Main Street and Broadway continued to deteriorate.[33] When upkeep exceeded rents, many property owners demolished their buildings, converting an ever-expanding share of downtown Redwood City into parking lots.

Offerman House: 1968-2015

In 1966, the authors of the classic *Historic Spots in California* observed that "Nothing remains of the earliest period of Redwood City's existence, unless it is an interesting little house with a high porch, at 1018 Main Street, which may have been built by George Heller in 1857."[34] Ironically, having survived the earlier threats of commercial growth and residential flight, by the late 1960s the Offerman House faced the even greater threat of neglect. Following Viola Offerman's death in 1968, the Offerman House was left to her nephew Malcolm Von Hofen. Van Hofen died shortly thereafter, leaving the property to a relative, Paul Jensen. By the late 1960s, the vacant and deteriorating Offerman House was widely considered to be an antiquated eyesore—one of many buildings in the downtown that city planners and developers wanted to tear down. A photograph from the late 1960s shows it in obvious disrepair with peeling paint and overgrown shrubbery **(Figure 8)**. An aerial photograph from the early 1970s shows it marooned in a sea of asphalt-paved parking lots **(Figure 9)**.

On June 29, 1973, Paul Jensen, administrator of Malcolm Von Hofen's estate, sold the Offerman House to Alf Carstens.[35] In 1973, Carstens leased it to the Redwood City Lions Club to serve as a Haunted House for the club's Halloween fundraiser, evidence of its appearance and reputation

[32] Viola Offerman, as quoted in undated article in the *Redwood City Tribune.* Richard Schellens Archive, Karl A. Vollmayer Local History Room, Redwood City Public Library.
[33] City of Redwood City, "Cultural and Historic Resources," *Redwood City Downtown Precise Plan Draft EIR* (August 24, 2010), 6-7.
[34] Mildred Brooke Hoover et al, *Historic Spots in California* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1966), 408.
[35] San Mateo County Recorder's Office, Book of Deeds 6420, 465.

at this point. In early 1974, Carstens offered the building to the Redwood City Fire Department for burning in a training exercise.[36] The proposal was greeted with horror by Redwood City's nascent preservation community led by Gladys and Clifton Woodhams. Flush with enthusiasm and experience after saving the Steamboat Gothic-style Lathrop House in downtown Redwood City, the Woodhamses bought the Offerman house property on March 8, 1974.[37]

After purchasing the Offerman House the Woodhamses decided to convert it into an antique shop. They hired the San Francisco architecture firm of Moulton and Clark to design the rehabilitation, which largely consisted of repairing the foundation; upgrading the building's electrical, plumbing, and heating systems; and repairing and/or replacing missing and/or damaged elements. Additional changes included reorienting the bathroom door toward the front of the house, installing shelving on the exterior of the sunroom/sleeping porch, and other minor changes necessary to convert the dwelling to commercial use.[38] The Woodhamses' attempts to rehabilitate the Offerman House according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards was difficult, mainly because the Redwood City Planning Department had no guidelines for preserving historic features that did not conform to the California Uniform Building Code. The Woodhamses refused to alter the building's important character-defining features, such as the non-code compliant porch railings. Finally, in 1975, the City deferred to the State Historical Building Code and issued the Certificate of Occupancy.[39]

In 1978, the Offerman House gained a neighbor, when the Woodhamses moved the circa 1891, Queen Anne-style John Dielmann House onto the property. The Woodhamses had bought the house to prevent its demolition. Its relocation to the southern part of the subject property, at 1020 Main Street, was part of a larger proposed preservation district that never got any further than that. Over the next 7 to 8 years, the Dielmann House was rehabilitated as a restaurant that opened in 1985-86. In addition to the two restored Victorian houses, the Woodhamses built a shared patio and an award-winning Victorian-style garden between the two buildings. From 1979 until the late 1990s, the Offerman House provided a period setting for Mrs. Woodhams' antique shop. Since 2000, it has housed an art gallery.

Historic Preservation in Redwood City: 1968-2015

Had Viola Offerman died a few years earlier it is not likely that the house would have survived. Fortunately, Redwood City's Centennial Celebration in 1967-68 drew attention to the city's downtown as a pioneer port, as well as San Mateo County's county seat and first incorporated city. This growing interest in local history inspired a growing appreciation for the city's few remaining historic buildings. This same year, concerned citizens saved the spectacular Steamboat Gothic-style 1863 Lathrop House from likely destruction and founded the Redwood

[36] Email correspondence with Judith Collas, February 11, 2015.
[37] San Mateo County Recorder's Office, Book of Deeds 6566, 199.
[38] Redwood City Building Department, Permit applications on file for 1018 Main Street.
[39] Ibid.

City Heritage Association to restore and maintain the building, as well as to promote the preservation of other historic buildings.

Meanwhile the movement to preserve Redwood City's historic resources slowly gained momentum. In 1974, the Offerman House was designated a California Point of Historical Interest. In 1977, concerned citizens established the first of Redwood City's historic districts, the Commercial Buildings Historic District, which included the sites of John Offerman's Eureka Saloon and Grocery and the Eureka Brewery. In 1980, the City established Redwood City's Historic Preservation Ordinance and set up the Historic Preservation (later Historic Resources) Advisory Committee. A sequence of plans followed, recognizing the remaining built legacy of early Redwood City as an essential component of the city's identity and as a potential tourist attraction. This process reached fruition in the visionary *Downtown Precise Plan*, adopted by the City Council in 2011.

Recognizing that the downtown Redwood City's historic resources are one of its most important qualities, the plan identifies historic resources to be preserved, including the Offerman and Dielmann Houses, and establishes clear standards and guidelines and ordinances for that purpose. Beside historic preservation, a primary goal of the Plan is to promote housing downtown to provide "a spectrum of in-town living and working opportunities."[40] Thus, in seeking to re-integrate housing with shops and services in a "livable downtown,"[41] the Plan aims not just to preserve historic buildings, but also to revive an essential feature of the historic community itself – the intermingling of commercial and residential uses. More recently, an influx of new residents and technology workers has led to the expansion of business in Redwood City's long-moribund downtown. No longer disparagingly called "Deadwood City," downtown Redwood City thrives, a regenerated historic downtown in a region largely characterized by car-dependent sprawl.

[40] City of Redwood City, *Downtown Precise Plan* (Redwood City: Amended July 22, 2013), 13.
[41] Ibid.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

____ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
____ previously listed in the National Register
____previously determined eligible by the National Register
____designated a National Historic Landmark
____ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_____
____recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:
____ State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
____ Federal agency
__X_ Local government
____ University
__X_ Other
Name of repository: Karl A. Vollmayer Local History Room, Redwood City Public Library; San Mateo County History Museum; San Mateo County Recorder's Office; Redwood City Planning Department

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _4063-0011-0000_____

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property _Less than one acre _____

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)
Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)
1. Latitude: 37.483753 Longitude: -122.226461

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)
The boundaries include the entirety of Lot 43 and the southerly 10' of Lot 44 as shown on San Mateo County Assessor's Map 53-13 **(Location Map 1)**, being approximately the northerly half of Assessor Parcel Number 053-137-020.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)
The boundaries include only the Offerman House and its adjoining landscaping at 1018 Main Street; it does not include the southern half of Assessor Parcel Number 053-137-020 or the Dielman House, at 1020 Main Street, Redwood City.

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title: _Christopher P. VerPlanck_____
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telephone: _(415) 391-7486_____
date: _February 2015_____

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photograph Log

Name of Property:	Offerman, John, House
City:	Redwood City
County:	San Mateo
State:	California
Name of Photographer:	Christopher VerPlanck
Date of Photographs:	January 29, 2015
Location of Original Digital Files:	57 Post Street, Suite 512, San Francisco, CA 94104
Number of Photographs:	11

CA_San Mateo County_John Offerman House_0001
Overall view, camera facing west

CA_San Mateo County_John Offerman House_0002
Perspective, camera facing southwest

CA_San Mateo County_John Offerman House_0003
North and east façades, camera facing southwest

CA_San Mateo County_John Offerman House_0004
Porch detail, camera facing southwest

CA_San Mateo County_John Offerman House_0005
Main Entrance, camera facing west

CA_San Mateo County_John Offerman House_0006
North and west façades, camera facing southeast

CA_San Mateo County_John Offerman House_0007
South façade, camera facing northwest

CA_San Mateo County_John Offerman House_0008
Detail of south façade of original 1857 dwelling, camera facing north

CA_San Mateo County_John Offerman House_0009
Detail of 1920 Sunroom/sleeping porch addition, camera facing northwest

CA_San Mateo County_Offerman House_0010
Interior of original 1857 dwelling, camera facing southeast

CA_San Mateo County_Offerman House_0011
Interior of original 1857 dwelling, camera facing east

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Site Map/Photo Key

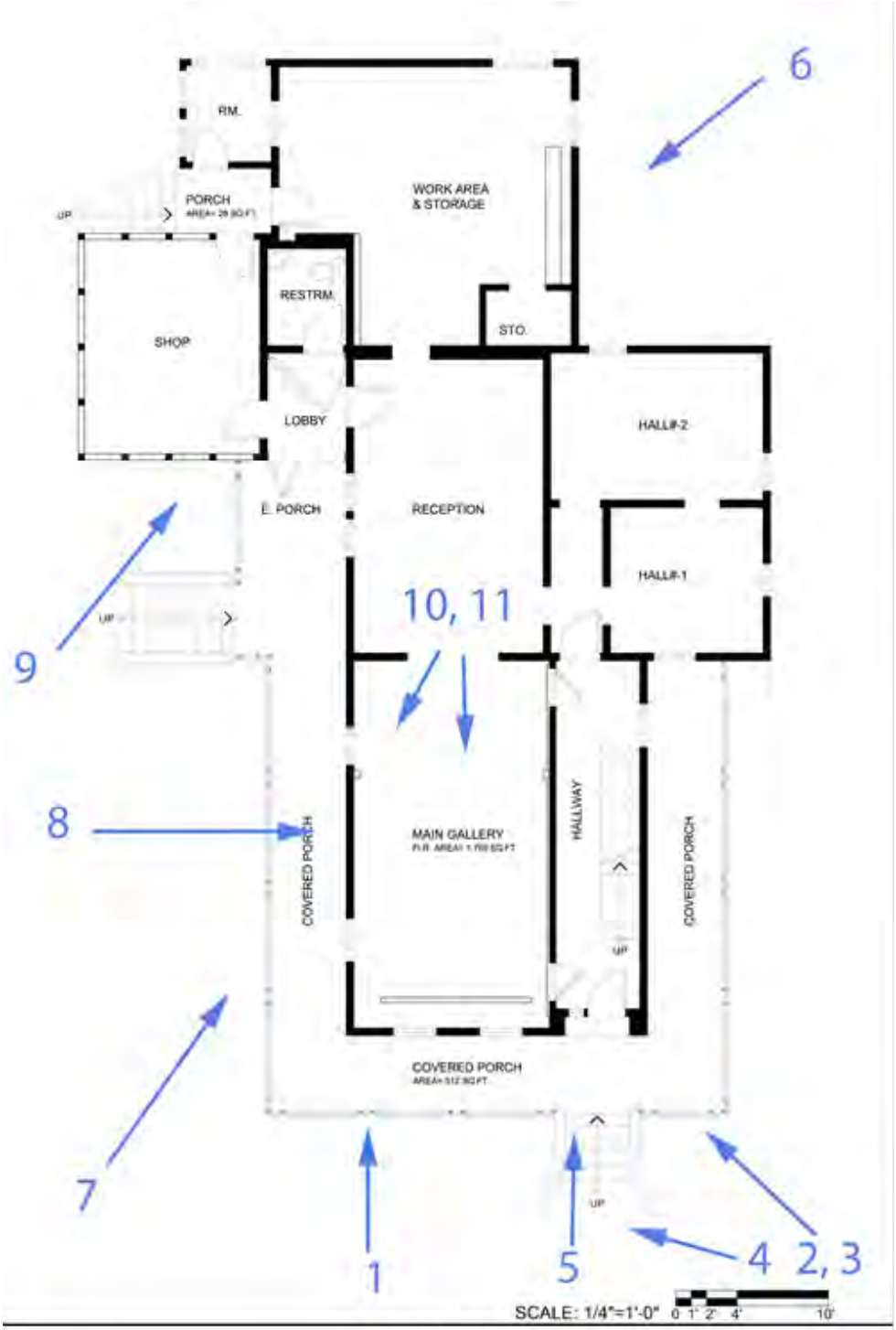
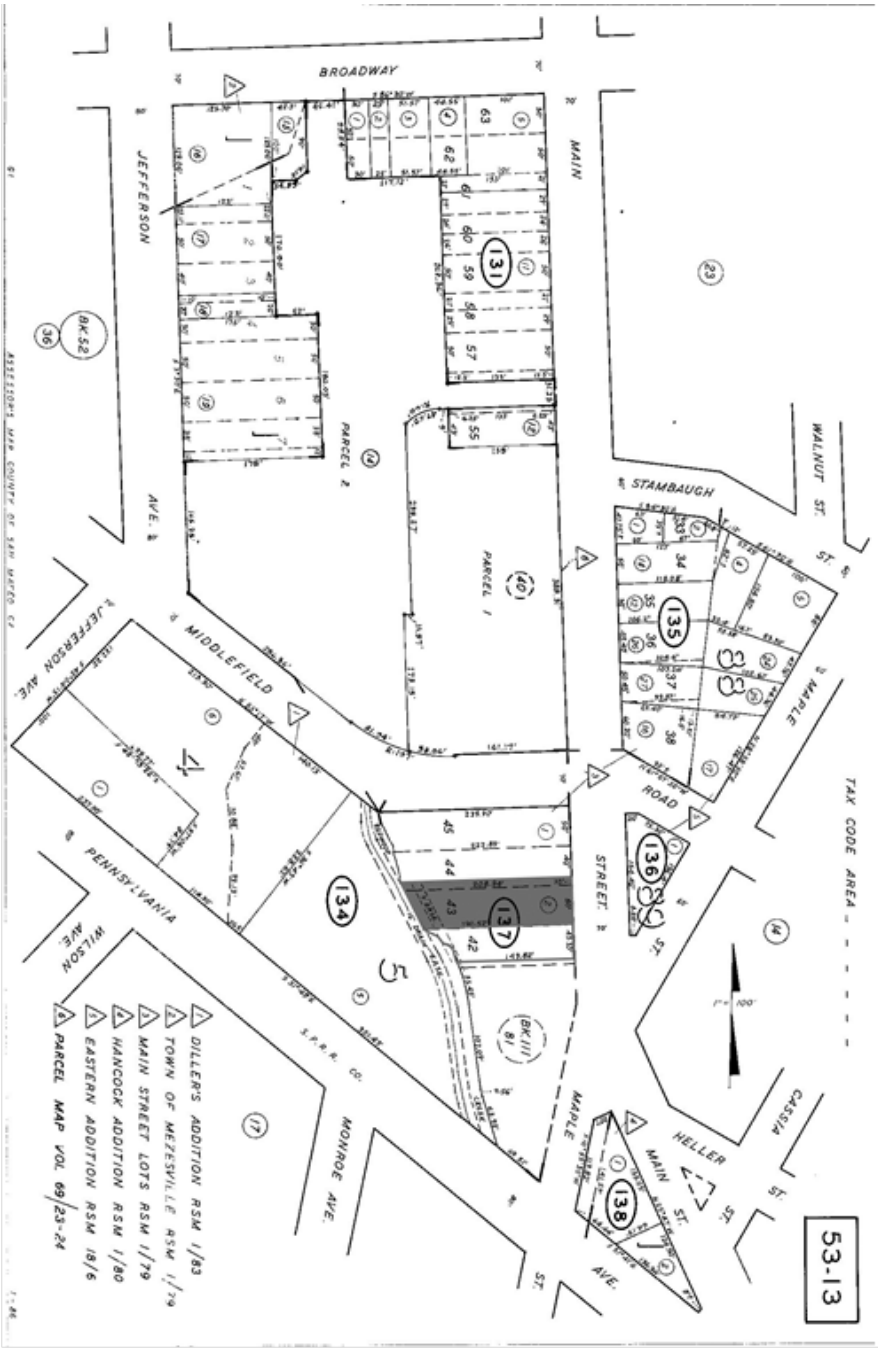


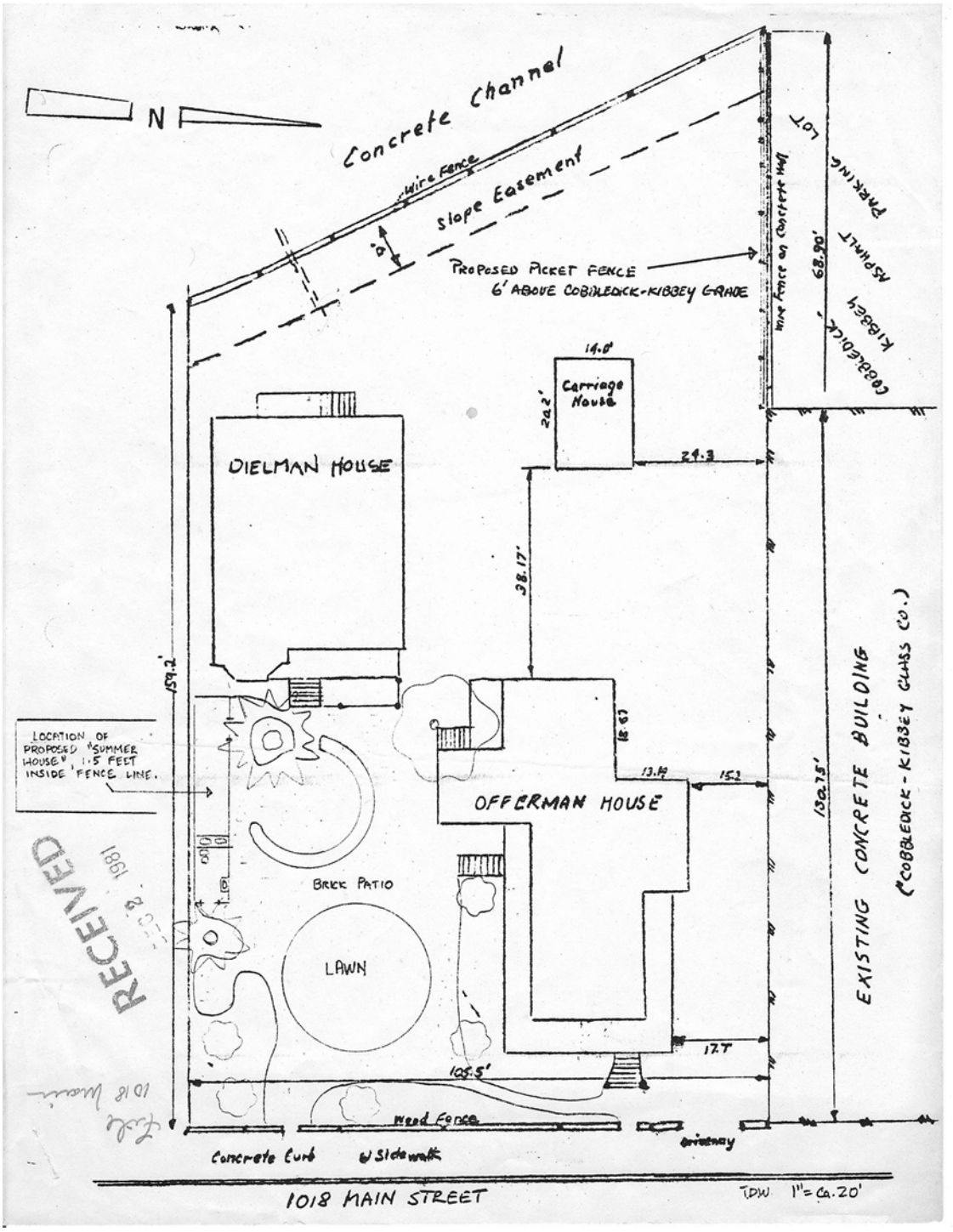
Photo Key Plan

Location Map 1 Assessor Parcel Map showing location of 1018 Main Street (in gray)
Source: San Mateo County Office of the Assessor-Recorder



Location Map 2: Annotated Aerial Photograph of 1018 Main Street, Redwood City
Source: Bing.com, annotated by Christopher VerPlanck

Sketch Map: Sketch Plan of 1018 Main Street, circa 1978.[42]
Source: Collection of Judith Collas



[42] Note: Carriage house on sketch plan no longer stands.

Additional Information: Historic Maps and Photographs

Figure 1. Section of the Map of the Town of Mezesville with Adjacent Villa Lots, 1857
Original boundaries of Offerman property indicated by blue arrow
Source: San Mateo History Museum Archives

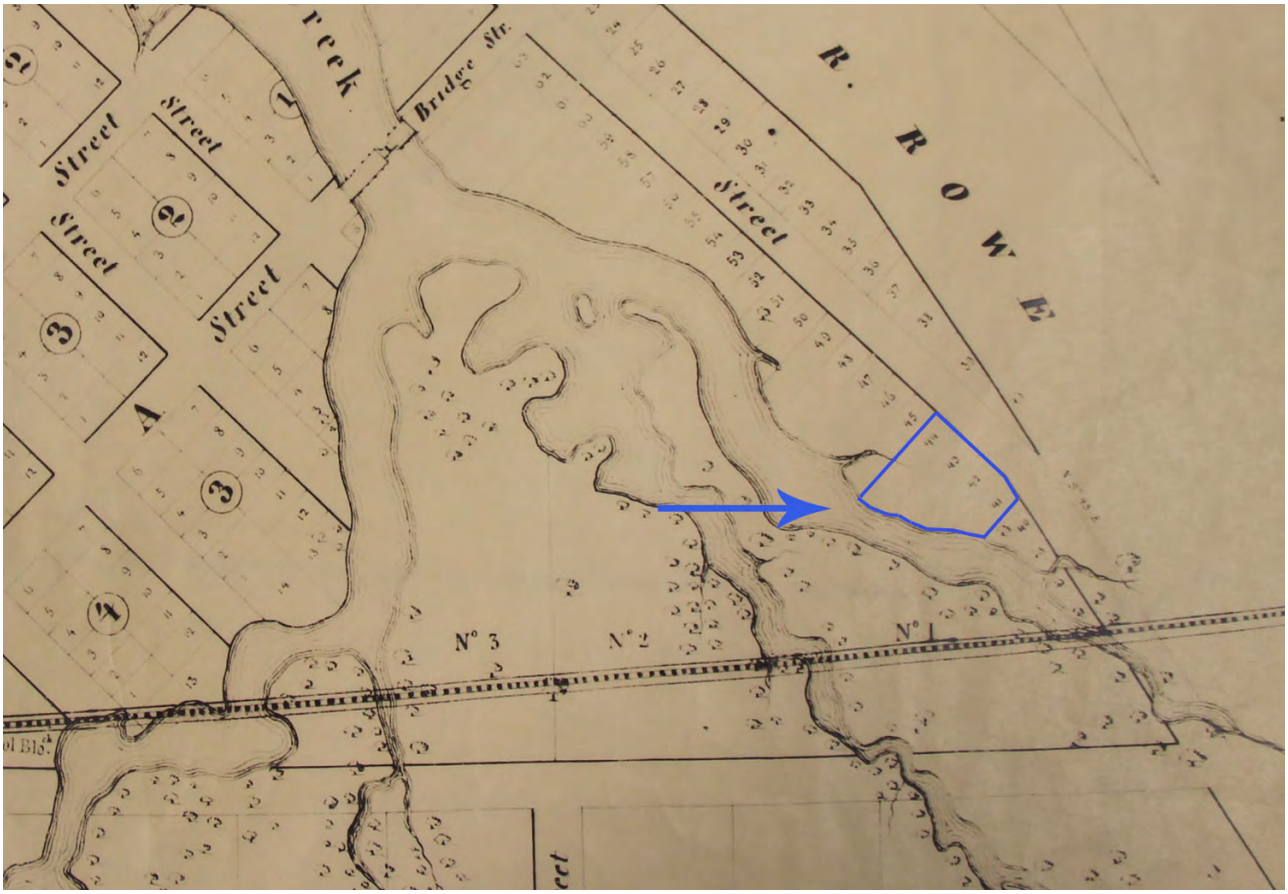


Figure 2. 1884 Sanborn Map, Location of Offerman House indicated by blue arrow
Source: Redwood City Public Library

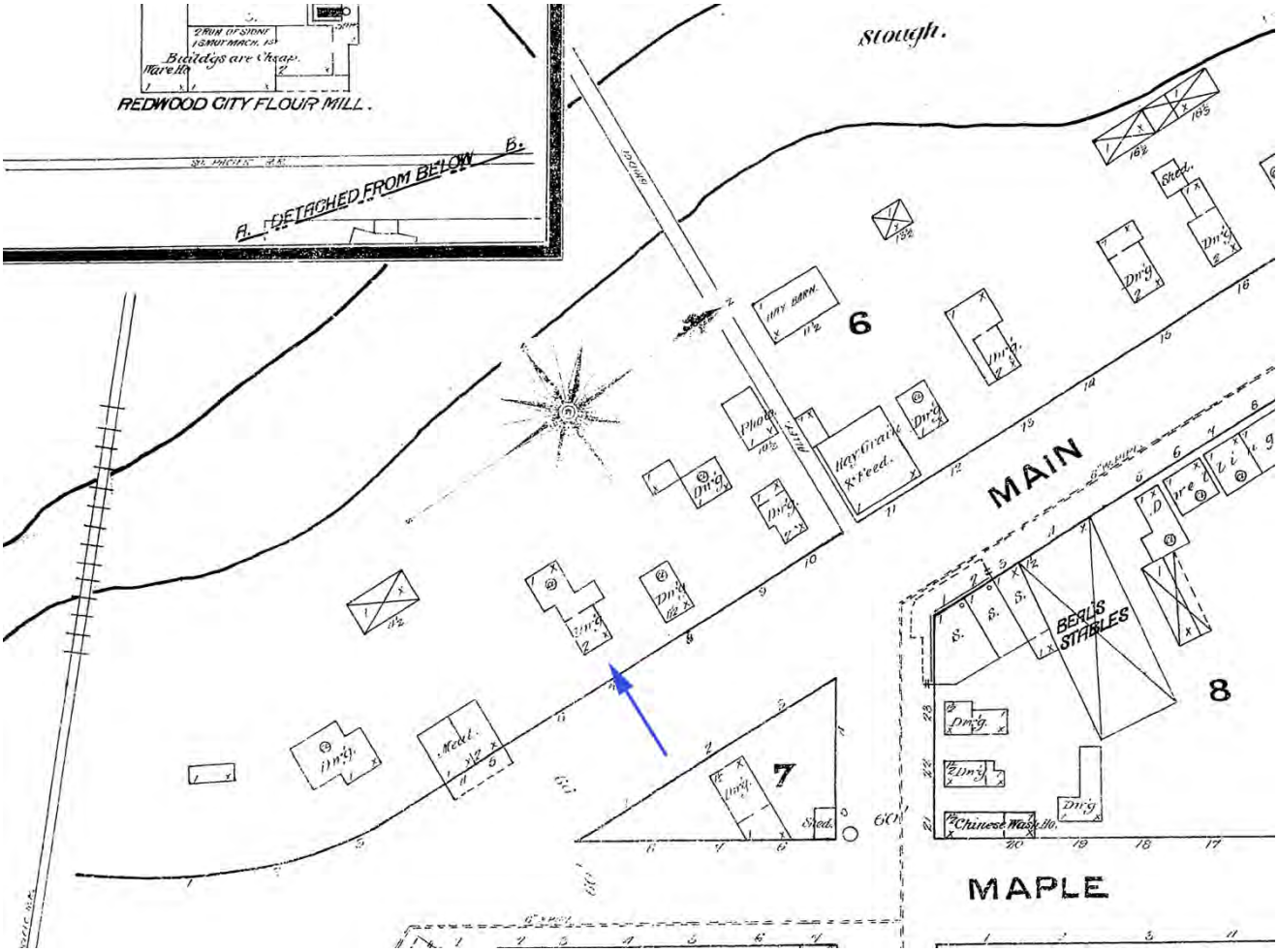


Figure 3. 1888 Sanborn Map , Location of Offerman House indicated by blue arrow Source: Redwood City Public Library

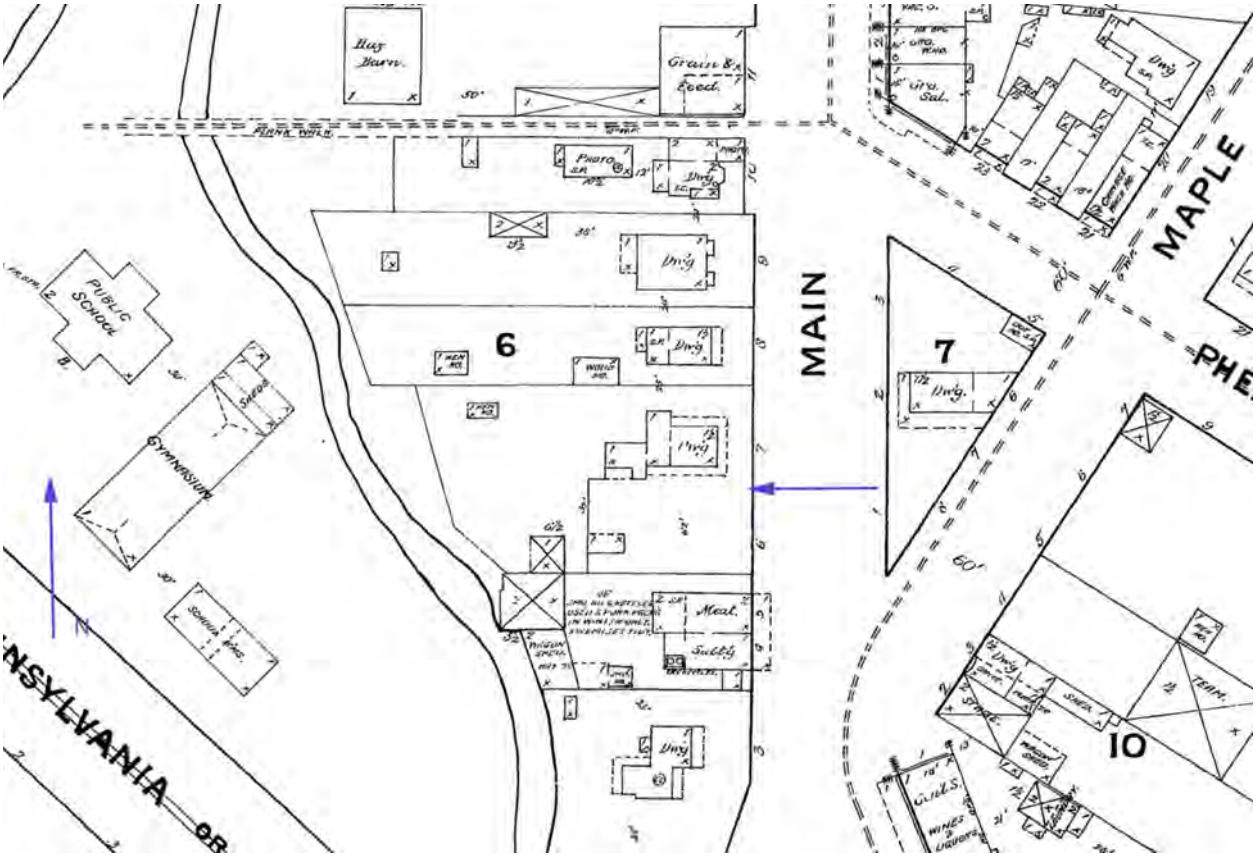


Figure 4. 1891 Sanborn Map, Location of Offerman House indicated by blue arrow
Source: Redwood City Public Library

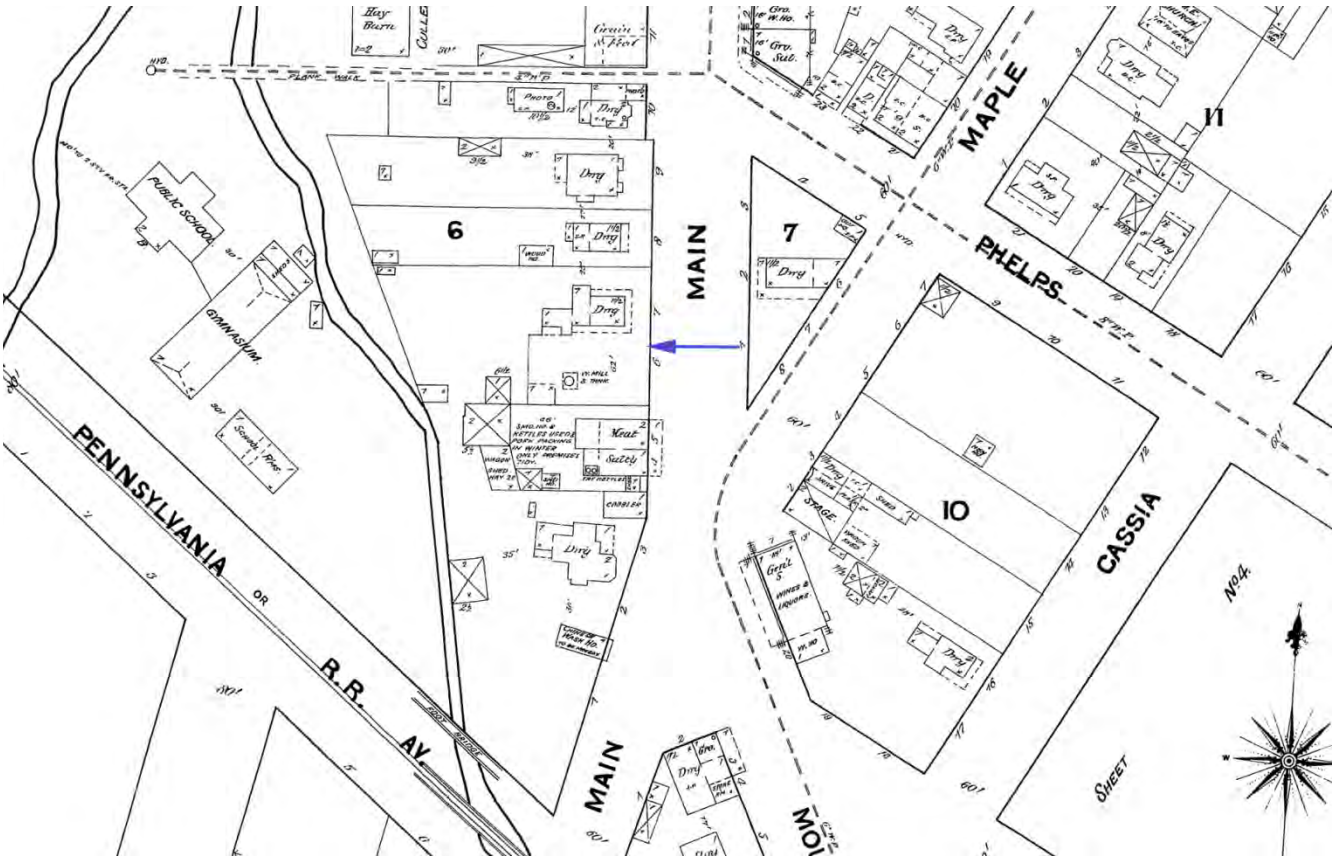


Figure 5. 1907 Sanborn Map, Location of Offerman House indicated by blue arrow
Source: Redwood City Public Library

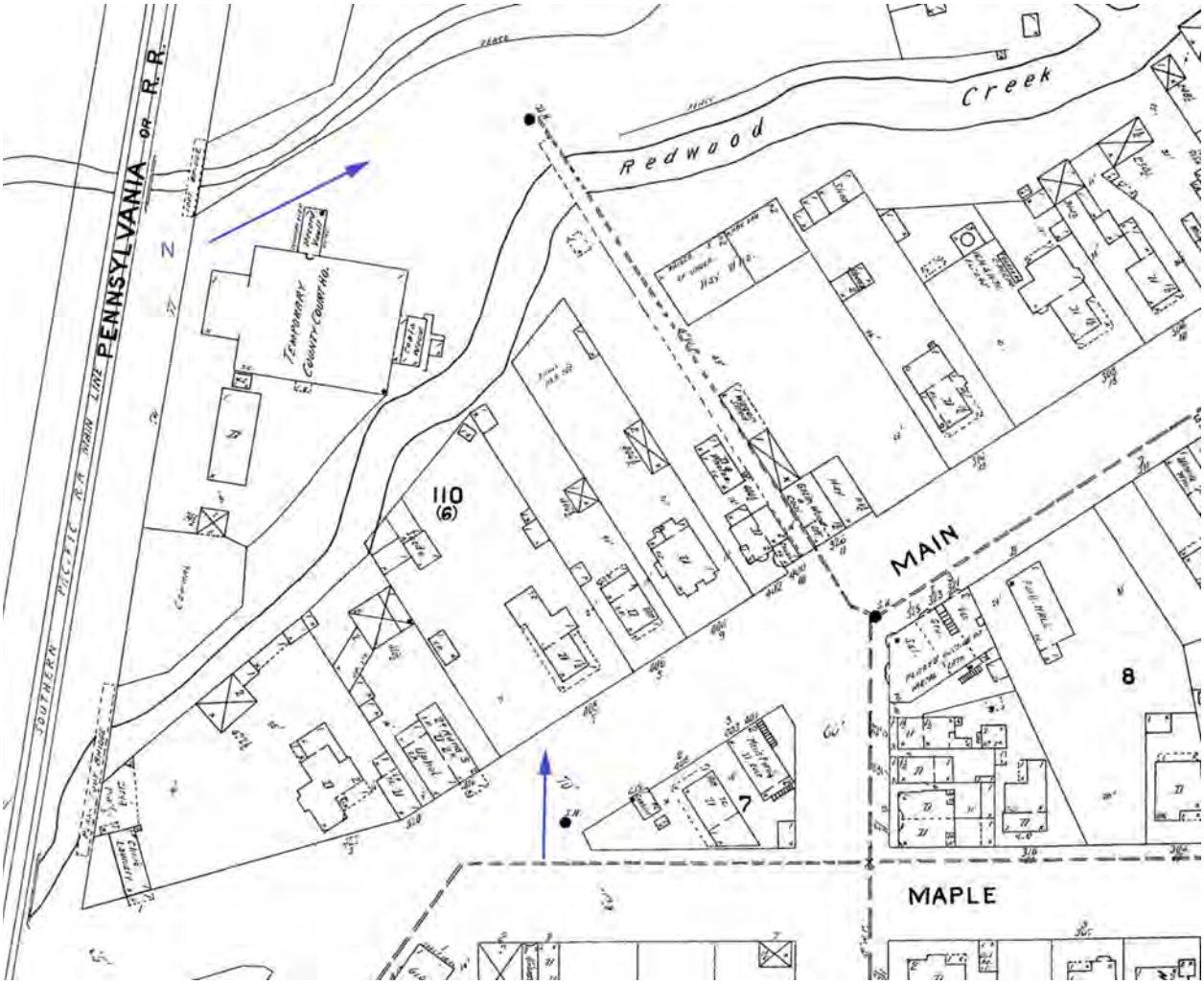


Figure 6. 1919 Sanborn Map, Location of Offerman House indicated by blue arrow
Source: Redwood City Public Library

Figure 7. 1950 Sanborn Map, Location of Offerman House indicated by blue arrow
Source: Redwood City Public Library

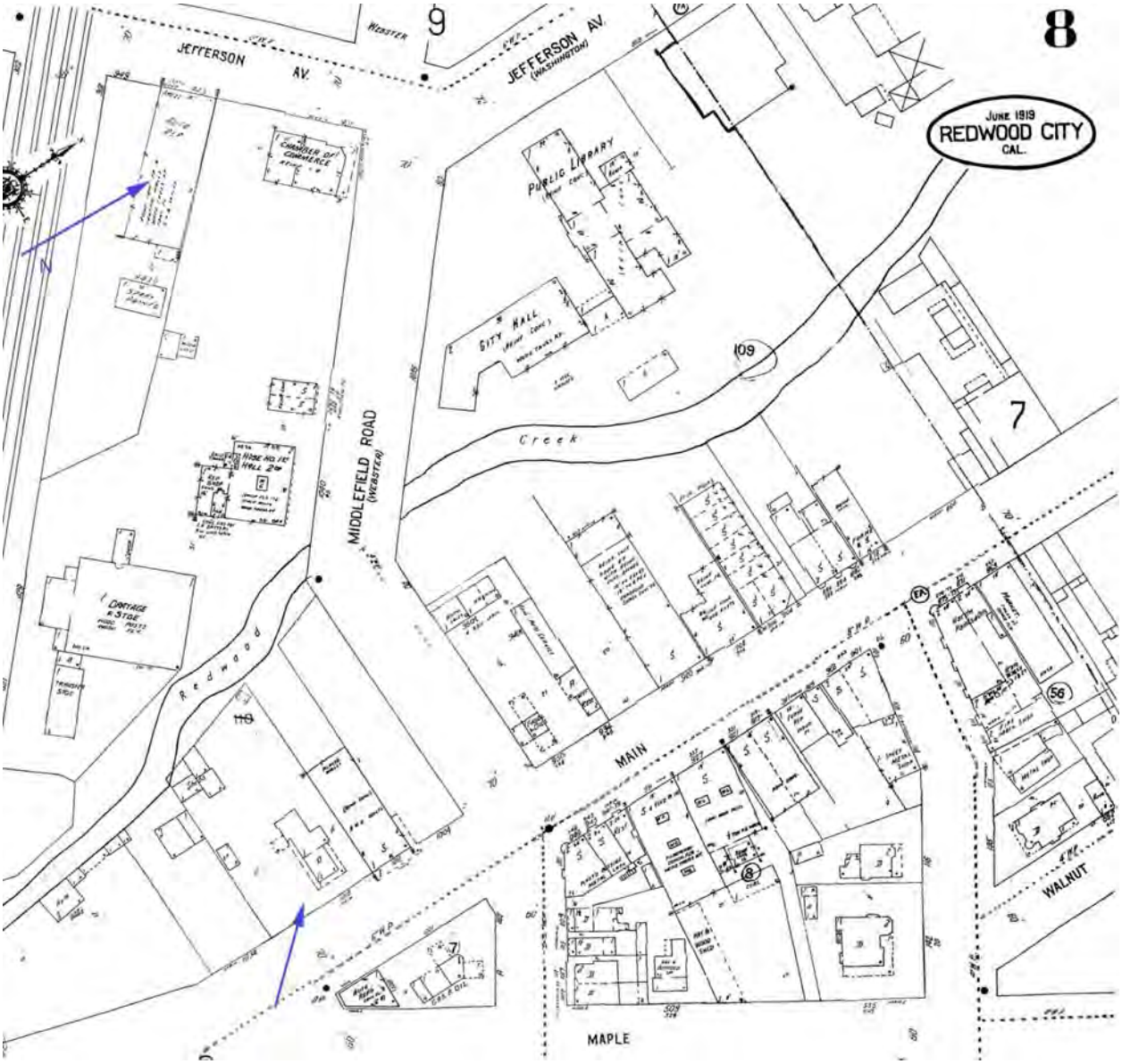


Figure 8. View of the Offerman House from the east side of Main Street, ca. 1965
Source: Karl A. Vollmayer Local History Room, Redwood City Public Library

Figure 9. Early 1970s aerial photograph, arrow indicates location of the Offerman House
Source: Karl A. Vollmayer Local History Room, Redwood City Public Library

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Cafe
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CATERING

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2 HOUR PARKING

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