

Proposal:	Heritage Property Nominations by owner applicants, associated with Mills Act contract applications.
Case File Number /Location/ City Council District/ Zoning:	1) LM21-001: 1120 Chester St. (APN 4-85-24); City Council District 3, Zoning RM-2 2) LM21-002: 1020-22 Bella Vista Av. (APN 23-389-11); City Council District 2, Zoning RM-1 3) LM21-003: 671 Longridge Rd. (APN 11-885-21); City Council District 2, Zoning RD-1 4) LM21-004: 901 Trestle Glen Rd. (APN 23-436-26-3); City Council District 2, Zoning RD-1
Applicant/Owner:	Multiple, see individual applications attached
Environmental Determination:	Categorically Exempt per CEQA Guidelines Sections: 15301 (Existing Facilities); 15305 (Minor Alterations in Land Use Limitations); 15306 (Information Collection); 15308 (Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment); 15331 (Historical Resource Restoration/Rehabilitation); Section 15183 (Projects consistent with the General Plan or Zoning).
Action to be Taken:	Determination that properties are eligible for Heritage Property status; and designation of eligible properties as City of Oakland Heritage Properties
For Further Information:	Contact case planner Betty Marvin at (510) 238-6879 or by email at bmarvin@oaklandca.gov

INTRODUCTION

Four properties are before the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (LPAB, Board) for review and consideration of Heritage Property eligibility and for Heritage Property designation, as set out in the Historic Preservation Element (HPE) of the Oakland General Plan. These applications have all been submitted in conjunction with applications for Mills Act tax incentive contracts. All four are PDHPs (Potential Designated Historic Properties) by virtue of preliminary or intensive survey ratings of at least “secondary importance,” and therefore appear eligible to apply for Heritage designation. The complete applications and evaluations attached to this report provide detailed documentation of their significance and eligibility.

BACKGROUND: HERITAGE PROPERTIES

Oakland’s Mills Act program, established in 2006, requires that participating properties be “Designated Historic Properties” designated by the Landmarks Board. Heritage Property is a less exclusive and more expeditious designation than City Landmark, defined in the HPE as appropriate for “Properties which definitively warrant preservation but which are not Landmarks or Preservation Districts.” Heritage Properties may be designated by the Landmarks Board or the Planning Commission, in contrast to City Landmarks and S-7 and S-20 districts which require an ordinance by City Council.

Eligibility: According to the Element, a PDHP is eligible for Heritage Property nomination on the basis of its Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey (OCHS) rating if it:

1. has an existing or contingency rating of A (Highest Importance), B (Major Importance), or C (Secondary Importance) “according to the methodology of the intensive survey”; or
2. has an existing or contingency rating of A or B from the preliminary (field) survey; or
3. contributes or potentially contributes to any area potentially eligible for Preservation District designation (Area of Primary or Secondary Importance – API or ASI).

Properties with individual A or B survey ratings and contributors to survey-identified Areas of Primary Importance are automatically on Oakland’s most significant *Local Register* as defined in Preservation Element Policy 3.8. To qualify for Mills Act contracts, however, if they are not already formally designated by the Landmarks Board as Landmarks, Heritage Properties, or S-7 or S-20 district contributors, Oakland’s procedure requires formal Landmarks Board designation. Four Mills applicants this year are for PDHPs seeking Heritage Property designation from the Board concurrently with their Mills Act applications. A fifth Mills applicant property, 1420 Magnolia Street, is already a Designated Historic Property as a contributor to the Oak Center S-20 Historic District.

Effect of designation: Like City Landmarks and S-7 and S-20 districts, Heritage Properties are Designated Historic Properties (HPE Policy 1.3), and therefore part of the Local Register – the top 2 to 3% citywide. As such they are Historical Resources for purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act, State Historical Building Code, Demolition Findings, and Mills Act. At a minimum, under the Element, demolition, removal, or “specified major alterations” of Heritage Properties may normally be postponed for up to 120 days. Design Review will require work that maintains the property’s historic character, and the Mills Act contract obligations include adherence to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation.

Designation process: Under the Preservation Element, Heritage Properties may be designated by the Landmarks Board or the City Planning Commission after owner notification and acceptance, or by the Planning Director on an emergency or temporary basis. Landmarks Board actions on Heritage Property designations are appealable by anyone to the City Planning Commission. Heritage Properties may be de-designated by the Board at the property owner’s request or at the Board’s initiative, but de-designation must be based on documentation that the property does not meet the Heritage Property eligibility criteria, unless the designation was for a limited period of time.

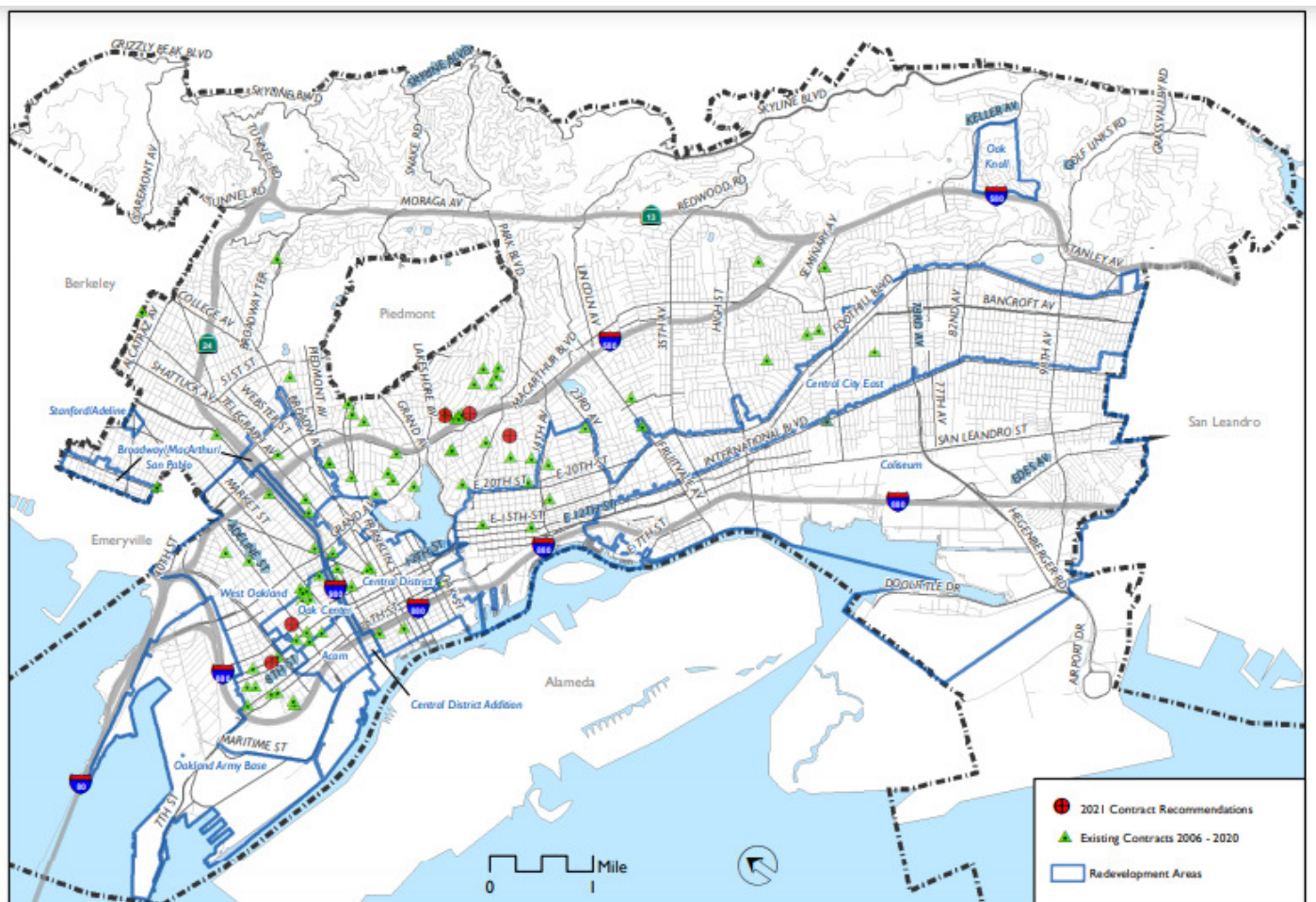
Since the present nominations are all owner-initiated in conjunction with owner-initiated Mills Act contract applications, the Board may designate any or all of the properties as Heritage Properties at this meeting without further hearing or owner notification, provided they meet the eligibility criteria.

ELIGIBILITY OF NOMINATED PROPERTIES

The properties proposed for designation at this meeting are described individually on the following pages. The Landmarks Board has a point system for evaluating Landmark and Heritage Property eligibility, based on but somewhat different from that of the Cultural Heritage Survey. Evaluation criteria and evaluation and tally sheets for Heritage Property eligibility, prepared by staff for Board review and adoption, are attached as Attachment 5 at the end of this report following the individual applications. Because the Mills Act program exists precisely to promote restoration and reversal of alterations, LPAB evaluations do not generally disqualify properties for reversible losses of integrity. Nominated properties all appear eligible and all four are recommended by staff for Heritage Property designation.

The five 2021 Mills properties are all houses or duplexes. Two are in former redevelopment areas in West Oakland (including the one in the Oak Center S-20), two are in the Lakeshore-Trestle Glen neighborhood, and one is in the Bella Vista district east of Park Boulevard. All are PDHPs in Areas of Primary or Secondary Importance (APIs, ASIs) identified as potential historic districts by the Survey, illustrating the importance of neighborhood character in Oakland.

Some of the applications build upon research begun in the Cultural Heritage Survey’s Neighborhoods and West Oakland surveys, while some applicants began documenting their buildings from the ground up, learning techniques of historical research and architectural description in the process. Applications are all well researched and presented, distinctive in style, and make valuable contributions to our (and the applicants’) knowledge of Oakland history, buildings, neighborhoods, and research sources and techniques. Work was all done remotely this year, and applicants showed great resourcefulness and persistence in piecing together information. One-page summaries for each Heritage nomination follow, largely based on the applicants’ own words and tone, and the full applications accompany this report as Attachments 1 to 4.



Planning & Building Department
May 2021



Mills Act Contracts and Contract Recommendations and Heritage Property Nominations, 2021

LM21-001: **1120 Chester St.** (APN 4-85-24), Carter (George & Mollie) house (Attachment 1)
 Applicants: Reuben Tomar and Dylan Denicke, owners Stick-Eastlake house, 1887-88



OCHS Rating: C1+ (intensive, 1989), individually secondary importance, API contributor
 Landmark/Heritage Property Eligibility Rating: B (34 points, 29 points as altered)

1120 Chester Street is a Stick style, stoutly constructed two-story Victorian, in the National Register-eligible Oakland Point District. It is two stories, redwood exterior, with a hip and gable roof and a two-story rectangular bay wrapped in tall windows. The studs—balloon framed, and nearly 25' long—as well as the joists, rafters, and tongue and groove flooring, are hard fir, spaced and sized for durability even for a period like the 1880s, abundant of first-rate building materials. The house is one of four semi-quadruplets, 1114 to 1126 Chester. The others are slightly newer and more Queen Anne in ornament and details, with angled rather than square bays. The row is a distinguished streetscape feature, pictured as a character-defining district view in the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey of Oakland Point and mentioned in the 1978 guidebook *Victoria's Legacy* which specifically notes “a good row of 1890s houses toward the north end, east side” of Chester.

The Carters, an Irish family, had the house built in 1887-88 (first tax assessment for improvements). George Carter was an engineer at the Burnham and Standeford Oakland Planing Mills at 1st and Washington and active in the Woodmen of the World lodge. He may have acted as his own contractor; at any rate, the construction reflects access and attentiveness to quality and quantity of materials. After building 1120 Chester the Carters built 1114 and 1118, the two houses to the south, in 1891. Like other small developers in the area, they built the houses in a similar style, giving coherency and unity to the block. The choice and quality of millwork with elaborate floral and geometric motifs, in the Stick-Eastlake style on 1120 and in the Queen Anne style on 1114 and 1118, represent a rare late 19th century woodwork vocabulary. After the Carters a family named Hernandez had the house in the 1930s, and in the 1960s it was owned by the Mustafa family. The rich ethnic history of Oakland Point is illustrated in the changes of title at 1120 Chester.

In the dark days of the Cypress freeway, the house was parted out like a used car, and the mantel, railings, pocket doors, front door, and most of the interior doors, were stripped and sold off. Gutters and foundation deteriorated. The double hung windows, eleven at the front of the house, were replaced with aluminum, and the front entry was walled off and replaced with a flimsy front door. The Mills work program will remedy these alterations.

LM21-002: **1020-22 Bella Vista Av.** (APN 23-389-11) (Attachment 2)

Myers (J. S.) – Taylor (Fred & Elizabeth) house, Colonial-Craftsman, 1900-01, Leo Nichols arch.
Applicants: Nora Brereton and Patrice Chiquet, owners/residents



OCHS Rating: Dc2+ (San Antonio survey, 1996): secondary imp., altered, district contributor
Heritage Property Eligibility Rating: B/C (33 points without deduction for alterations/20 as altered)

A building contract dated September 18, 1900, identifies the original owner as J.S. Myers, architect as Leo Nichols, and builder as C.M. MacGregor. The house sits on a prominent curve of Bella Vista Avenue in a district of 89 mostly large, individually distinctive homes built c.1890-1910 at the top of the ridge between Park Boulevard and 14th Avenue adjacent to Borax Smith's Arbor Villa estate. The subdividers marketed "lots on Eleventh and Bella Vista Avenues to those who will agree to build Beautiful Residences" (*Oakland Enquirer*, May 31, 1890). J.S. Myers was a prominent real estate operator and developer from about 1898-1915, primarily in North and West Oakland (his own luxurious 1902-03 Craftsman house is at 1494 Alice Street). Reportedly he "developed large tracts of land... and many of these are now among the most beautiful residence sections."

By 1905 the owners and long-time residents were Fred and Elizabeth Taylor. Fred was president of the Bowman Drug Co.. As East Oakland evolved, by 1936 the house had become two flats, and then three apartments by 1946, with side and rear additions. Asbestos siding was applied in 1952.

Oakland architect Leo Nichols worked as a draftsman with A.W. Pattiani and then on his own from the 1890s to the 1910s. He worked in a distinctive shingle and Craftsman-Colonial style, especially in the Linda Vista-Oakland Avenue area which was a showplace of modern shingle architecture at the end of the nineteenth century. Linda Vista somewhat resembles Bella Vista's building stock and contoured terrain. Builder Charles Manning MacGregor, a native of Nova Scotia, was known as "One-Nail MacGregor" either for thriftiness or for never sparing an extra nail. He often worked with Leo Nichols and other well-known architects. His homes are known for being well-built and are prized today; in Albany he is famed for his Mediterranean bungalows and civic activity.

Nichols's design for 1020 Bella Vista is complex and asymmetrical with a striking two-story angled bay wrapping the corner. A photo obtained by the real estate agent shows that the woodwork on the bay was painted white to distinguish it from the brown shingles on the rest of the home. Distinctive features include the flared hip roof, 25 ornamental transoms, a fanlight window with a little shelf at center front, and the front porch with six columns. It is an outstanding restoration opportunity.

LM21-003: **671 Longridge Rd.** (APN 11-885-21), Dowell-Chambliss house, 1919-20 (Att. 3)
 Beaux Arts eclectic house Applicants: Susie Cohn and Bradley Cohn, owners/residents



OCHS Rating: C2+ (prelim. 1985-86): secondary import., contrib. to Lakeshore-Trestle Glen ASI
 Heritage Property Eligibility Rating: B (33 points, 25 as altered)

Original permit #54252, 12/10/1919, arch. Albert Farr, builder Alfred Peterson, owner W. Dowell

As one of the earliest properties built in the Lakeshore Highlands tract, designed by renowned architect Albert Farr, 671 Longridge Road occupies a unique place in the history of the residential development around it. On its down-sloping double-wide lot, its elegance helped set a design standard for the neighborhood. Its residents exemplify the evolution of the diverse community, and physical changes to the building reflect the tensions between modern tastes and historic character.

In the 1880s, the future Lakeshore area was popularly known as Sather Park and in 1893 transit magnate Francis Marion “Borax” Smith extended a trolley line from downtown Oakland over a new trestle to the area, and soon formed a partnership with Frank C. Havens called the Realty Syndicate to acquire land along trolley lines for real estate development. In 1913, Havens, Smith, and Walter H. Leimert acquired the 212 acres of Sather property to develop “the perfect neighborhood” with “natural woodland retreats” and “high-class residential sites,” and commissioned the nationally prominent Olmsted Brothers to design the tract. Lakeshore Highlands was marketed as the ideal trolley suburb, with easy access to San Francisco. Foretelling the importance of the automobile, however, 671 Longridge Road sits slightly off-center to accommodate a garage and driveway.

Architect Albert Farr (1871-1947) is best known for Jack London’s 1910 Wolf House in Sonoma County. For well-heeled clients in San Francisco, Oakland, Belvedere, and Piedmont, Farr designed large, eclectic period-influenced residences known for spacious rooms and “a sense of delight.”

The original clients for 671 Longridge (2 stories, 11 rooms, \$15,000) were dentist and music patrons Walter and Audrey Dowell, followed by Chevrolet dealer Frank and Alma Dailey who were supporters of The Baby Hospital, and other professionals active in civic life. Between 1963 and 1988, the house belonged to Charlotte and Robert Chambliss. Charlotte Chambliss graduated from California College of Arts & Crafts, received her doctorate in education at UC Berkeley, and taught art at Prescott School and McClymonds High. Living here not long after restrictive covenants were invalidated, they were likely one of the first African American families in the neighborhood.

In 2013 a speculator replaced the windows and doors “in overt defiance of Lakeshore Homes Association rules.” Restoring the wood sash based on the original is part of the Mills work program.

LM21-004: **901 Trestle Glen Rd.** (APN 23-436-26-3) Tucker - Garden House, 1941 (see Att. 4)
 Normandy Revival-Moderne house Applicants: Stephen and Laura Geist, owners/residents

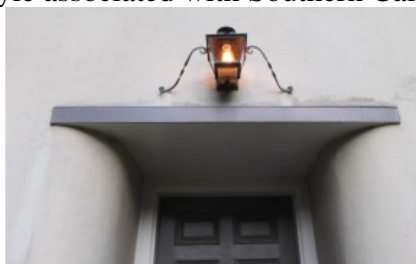


OCHS Rating: C2+ (preliminary survey, 1986): secondary importance, contributor to
 Lakeshore-Trestle Glen ASI Landmark/Heritage Property Eligibility Rating: B (34 points)

The first owners of this picturesque house, Arthur J. and Ada Tucker, were English immigrants active in East Bay public health, garden, and civic groups. Arthur was a District Manager for Metropolitan Life Insurance and Ada was active with the Montclair Women’s Garden Club. Until 1941 the creekside site of 901 Trestle Glen was the rear yard of the Tuckers’ Schirmer-designed 1926 house at 919 Trestle Glen, and they adorned the 901 lot with gardens, walkways, fishponds, a “Walt Disney” shed, and a faux stone lower patio that remains in use. 901 is still commonly known in the neighborhood as the “Garden House” and now has high visibility next to Warren Hook Park. The park was developed after 919 Trestle Glen Road and dozens of other houses in the Lakeshore Homes Association tracts were demolished in the early 1960s for the 580 freeway.

901 Trestle Glen was built under permit A92965, 9/18/1941, builder C. Hansen and architect W.E. Schirmer. The house’s most instantly recognizable features are the second story hooded multi-lite casement windows that project through the eave line as semi-dormers, and the first-story bay window with a bell-shaped roof that tapers upward to meet the base of the second story window. The center front door is deeply inset between curved walls, below an original copper light fixture.

Oakland architect William Edward Schirmer has many lavish European revival designs in Lakeshore-Trestle Glen, notable for authentically executed traditional exteriors as well as eloquent and distinctive treatment of interior spaces, favoring barrel vaulted ceilings, curved window frames, arched doorways, oval stairwells, wrought-iron fixtures, and highest quality materials and craftsmanship, all found at 901 Trestle Glen. This elegant house dates from a period when Schirmer was also working on Moderne civic buildings including the Alameda County Courthouse. It represents a unique late, somewhat streamlined version of French-inspired period revival, verging on the Hollywood Regency style associated with Southern California architects like Paul Williams.



RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Receive any testimony from applicants and the public;
2. Review application forms; review staff’s Heritage Property eligibility rating sheets and summaries and revise as appropriate;
3. Determine that the properties are eligible for City of Oakland Heritage Property designation;
4. Designate as City of Oakland Heritage Properties:

LM21-001: **1120 Chester St.** (APN 4-85-24); City Council District 3

LM21-002: **1020-22 Bella Vista Av.** (APN 23-389-11); City Council District 2

LM21-003: **671 Longridge Rd.** (APN 11-885-21); City Council District 2

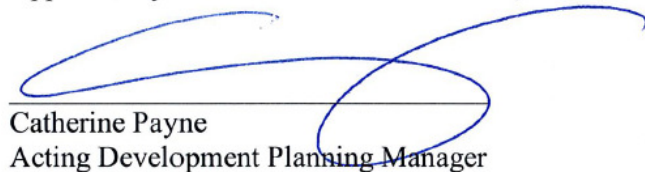
LM21-004: **901 Trestle Glen Rd.** (APN 23-436-26-3); City Council District 2

Prepared by:



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Historic Preservation Planner

Approved by:



Catherine Payne
Acting Development Planning Manager

Attachments:

- 1: Heritage Property application, LM21-001, **1120 Chester St.**
- 2: Heritage Property application, LM21-002, **1020-22 Bella Vista Av.**
- 3: Heritage Property application, LM21-003, **671 Longridge Rd.**
- 4: Heritage Property application, LM21-004, **901 Trestle Glen Rd.**
- 5: Heritage Property evaluation forms and Landmarks Board evaluation criteria