

State of California - The Resources Agency
 DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
 HRI #
 Trinomial
 NRHP Status Code

Other Listings
 Review Code Reviewer Date

Page 1 of 6 *Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder): Wessendorf & Son Mortuary

P1. Other identifier: The Prophet Elias Greek Orthodox Church

*P2. Location: Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County Santa Cruz County and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a location map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad Santa Cruz Date Revised 1994 T .11 S. ; R .2 W. ; Mount Diablo B.M.

c. Address: 223 Church St. City Santa Cruz Zip 95060

d. UTM:(give more than one for large and/or linear resources) Zone 10S ; 586478 mE/ 4092413 mN

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate)

southeast corner of Church and Center Streets. APN# 005-072-49

*P3a. Description: (Describe resource and its major elements, include design, material, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)

The Greek Revival designed building located at the corner of Church and Center Streets in Santa Cruz's Central neighborhood was constructed to house the Wessendorf Mortuary in 1926. The façade design is rare in Santa Cruz, but is characteristic of the Period Revival designs from the Interwar era found today in many urban centers. The Greek Revival design is embodied in its prominent gabled pediment with four Tuscan columns, as well as its arched stained-glass windows. The portico is symmetrical with a centered door, but the church building has an asymmetrical original side wing that features a flat parapet wall, an arched door and window at ground level, and small 4/1 single-hung windows above. On the opposite side is a shallow square bay window with a ribbon of windows. The rear has been altered with a modern Greek Revival addition. The Wessendorf & Son Mortuary remained at this location for over a half a century. When The Prophet Elias Greek Orthodox Church acquired this site in 1981, it maintained the Greek Revival design and expanded the building to the rear.

*P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP16. Religious building

*P4. Resources Present: Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)



P5b. Description of Photo:
 (View, date, accession #)
 View facing south, 2009.

*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source:

Historic Prehistoric Both
 1926, news articles, 83 years old.

*P7. Owner and Address:

*P8. Recorded By: (Name, affiliation, and address)

F. Maggi/L. Dill/J. Kusz
 Archives & Architecture, LLC
 PO Box 1332
 San Jose, CA 95109

*P9. Date Recorded: 5/6/09

*P10. Survey Type: (Describe)

Intensive

*P11. Report Citation: (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none".)

Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey - Vol. III, Department of Planning and Community Development, City of Santa Cruz, 2009.

*Attachments:

- None Continuation Sheet District Record Rock Art Record Other (List):
 Location Map Building, Structure, and Object Record Linear Feature Record Artifact Record
 Sketch Map Archaeological Record Milling Station Record Photograph Record

State of California - The Resources Agency
 DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

Primary #
 HRI #

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*NRHP/CRHR Status Code 3CS

Resource Name (Assigned by recorder) Wessendorf & Son Mortuary

B1. Historic Name: Wessendorf & Son Mortuary

B2. Common Name: 223 Church St. - The Prophet Elias Greek Orthodox Church

B3. Original Use: Mortuary

B4. Present Use: Church

*B5. Architectural Style: Greek Revival

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

Constructed in 1926. Rear expansion in 1980s.

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: n/a

Original Location: nn/a

*B8. Related Features:

None.

B9a. Architect: Unknown

b. Builder: Palmer & Balsiger

*B10. Significance: Theme Architecture

Area: Central

Period of Significance: 1926 - 1976

Property Type: Commercial

Applicable Criteria: (1), (3)

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

This Greek Revival building was constructed as the Wessendorf Mortuary in 1926 by Louis Wessendorf and his son, Lester. Contracting company Palmer & Balsiger began construction of the property in 1925, completing the building in 1926. The German-born Louis Wessendorf was initially an upholsterer who worked for undertaker George Staffler. When Staffler retired, Wessendorf took over the business, along with his son Lester. The Wessendorf Mortuary remained at this location over a half a century. In 1981, The Prophet Elias Greek Orthodox Church acquired this site, and continues to operate a church at this location today.

(Continued on page 4, DPR523L)

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (list attributes and codes) None

*B12. References:

- City of Santa Cruz building permits.
- City of Santa Cruz Standard Map, 1929.
- Lehmann, Susan. Historic Context Statement for City of Santa Cruz. 2000.
- Polk. R. L., Santa Cruz City Directory. 1925-1989.
- Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1905-1950.
- Santa Cruz Evening News, 12/4/1925.
- U.S. Census, 1910-1930.

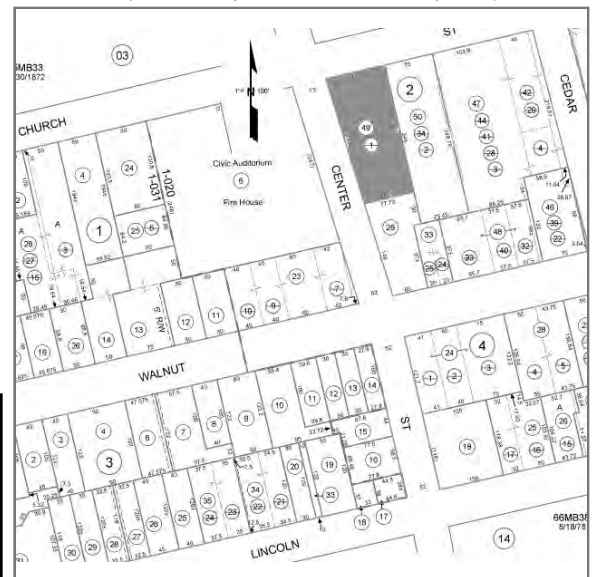
B13. Remarks: None

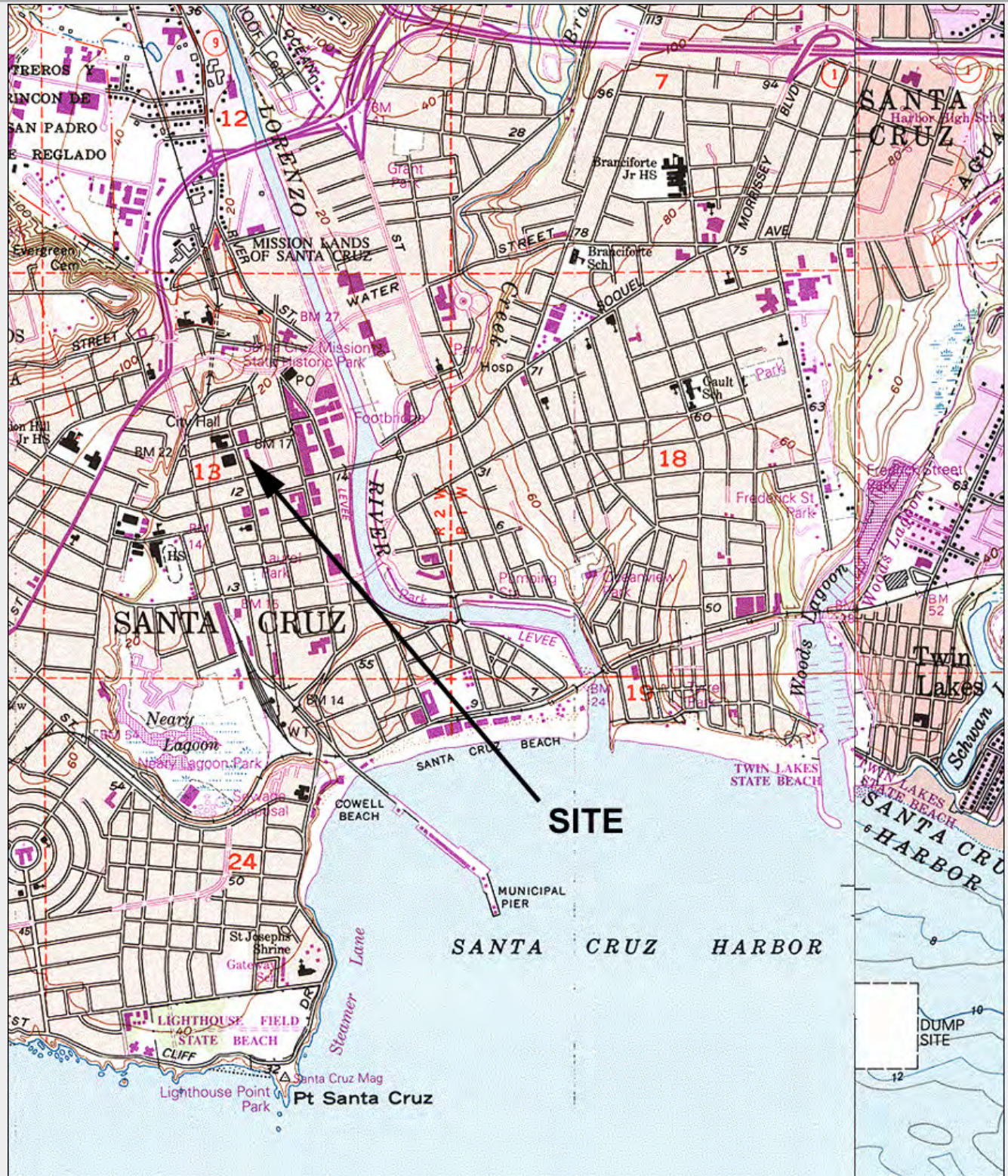
*B14. Evaluator: Leslie Dill

*Date of Evaluation: May 6, 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)





TN * MN
14 1/2°

Map created with TOPO!® ©2003 National Geographic (www.nationalgeographic.com/topo)

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* Recorded By F. Maggi/L. Dill/J. Kusz * Date 5/6/2009 Continuation Update

(Continued from page 2, DPR523b, B10)

SIGNIFICANCE

The property was found eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources under Criterion (1) and (3). Although the building has been adaptively reused as a church, it continues to represent through its form and detail, the early mortuary use, which has associations with community social and cultural history in twentieth century Santa Cruz. Thus, the building would appear eligible under Criterion (1). The early persons associated with the construction and early use of the building, the Wessendorf family, are well-known in the City of Santa Cruz, but are not known for substantial contributions beyond the operation of their mortuary business, therefore the property does not appear to be eligible for the California Register under Criterion (2). Although the specific architect of the building has not yet been identified, the building is a distinctive Greek Revival design, and would appear to be eligible for listing under Criterion (3).

When considered for listing within the Historic Building Survey of the City of Santa Cruz however, the property meets the following criteria:

1. The building is a significant example of the built environment heritage of the City as a representative of a commercial building from the 1920s in Santa Cruz's downtown; and
5. The building is recognized as possessing special aesthetic merit or value as a building with quality of architecture and that retains sufficient features showing its architectural significance as a Greek Revival design; and/or
6. The building is recognized as possessing distinctive stylistic characteristics or workmanship significant for the study of the period; and
7. The building, although expand to the rear, retains sufficient integrity to accurately convey its significance.

Integrity

The property maintains much of its apparent historical integrity as per the National Register's seven aspects of integrity. The building maintains its original location on the corner of Church and Center Streets in downtown Santa Cruz. The immediate area includes a number of public early-to-mid-century buildings with a similar sense of scale and setback. The subject building retains its public scale and somewhat imposing feeling and continues, through its form, massing and detailing, to illustrate its associations with Interwar period development in Santa Cruz. The building's design retains its integrity with the Greek Revival style; the Greek Revival form and detailing are rare in Santa Cruz, embodied in its prominent gabled pediment with four Tuscan columns, as well as its arched stained-glass windows.

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Side elevation from Center Street, viewed facing east.

CONTINUATION SHEET

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Rear elevation of addition, viewed facing north.