

**HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION
HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE REPORT**

**Prepared by Nicole Hernandez, MFA, City Architectural Historian
April 2021**

1201 Anacapa Street

SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA

Designation Status: Eligible to be designated a Structure of Merit and Contributing to El Pueblo Viejo Historical District

Assessor Parcel Number: 039-183-035

Constructed: 1951

Historic Name: First Presbyterian Church Sunday School

Property Description: A three-story, mid-century interpretation of Mediterranean style with formality, massing and symmetry reminiscent of the Beaux Arts.

The structure has a low-pitched hipped roof covered in terra-cotta tiles. The symmetrical, stucco building has recessed, divided-light, steel casement windows. On the corners of the third floor are oculus windows with divided light patterns. The street facing sets of doors are recessed in heavy, stylized surrounds. The door facing East Anapamu has art deco style darts in the surround.

Architect: Winsor Soule, FAIA and John Frederic Murphy FAIA,

Builder: Unknown

Architectural Style: Mid-century interpretation of the Mediterranean Style

Property Type: Commercial Storefront

Original Use: Commercial Storefront

Significance: The City of Santa Barbara establishes historical significance as provided by the Municipal Code, Section 22.22.040. Any historic building that meets one or more of the eleven criteria (Criteria A through K) established for a City Landmark, or a City Structure of Merit can be considered significant. The structure may be significant as a Structure of Merit per the following criteria:

Historic Integrity

1201 Anacapa Street is in excellent condition, since it has been relatively unaltered and still obtains almost all of the original materials. The building conveys integrity of location, design, setting, materials,

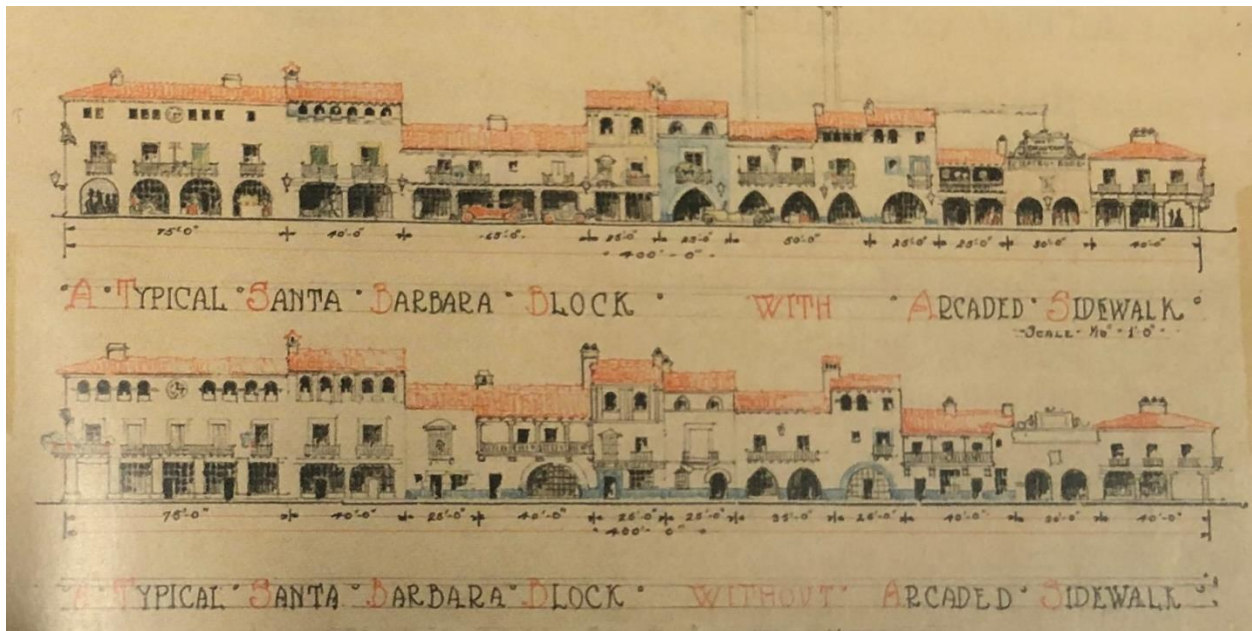


feeling and association by being an example of the mid-century interpretation of the Mediterranean style in Santa Barbara.

Criterion A. Its character, interest or value as a significant part of the heritage of the City, the State or the Nation:

Constructed in 1951 the building was designed by the noted architectural firm of Soule and Murphy as a Sunday School for the First Presbyterian Church. The building was converted into an Office building for the California Thrift and Loan in 1973 and then converted to the Anacapa School in 1990. In 2007 it was converted to a coffee shop/restaurant. All the major alterations have been on the interior, leaving the exterior with its original elements.

The building contributes to the historic significance of El Pueblo Viejo Landmark District that began to see Mediterranean style buildings in the late 1910s and early 1920s. With increased leisure travel to Europe during the late 1800s and early 1900s, patrons began to request architecture strongly based on particular regions of the Mediterranean. With more advanced printing techniques, as well as carefully studied drawings and photographs, architects were able to base their designs on highly accurate academic books of Italian architecture. In Santa Barbara, European Mediterranean architecture fit well with the Mediterranean-like climate and was easily mixed with the growing popularity of Spanish Colonial Revival style, as well as the thriving Mission Revival architecture. There are a few examples of commercial Mediterranean style buildings in downtown Santa Barbara, as well as many large homes in the Upper East neighborhood and on the Riviera. Another key to the success of the Mediterranean and Spanish Colonial Revival styles in Santa Barbara was the Plans and Planting Committee, through which Pearl Chase and others helped to sway Santa Barbara towards a more unified architectural style based on the City's Spanish Colonial and Mexican past. After the earthquake of 1925, much of the rebuilding of State Street and the El Pueblo Viejo area was in the Mediterranean and Spanish Colonial Revival styles. The building sits in the center of El Pueblo Viejo Landmark District whose purpose is to preserve and enhance the unique heritage and architectural character of the central area of the city



1923 Sketch of Typical Santa Barbara Block by George Washington Smith. Courtesy of UCSB Art, Design, & Architecture Museum

developed around the Royal Presidio. El Pueblo Viejo has many of the City's important historic and architectural landmarks. Regulation of architectural styles of new construction in the Spanish Colonial or Mediterranean styles enhances the cohesiveness of the area, however preservation of the original pieces of architecture is essential to keeping the Landmark District authentic and illustrate the art, materials and creativity of the architects and planners. Between 1923 and 1925

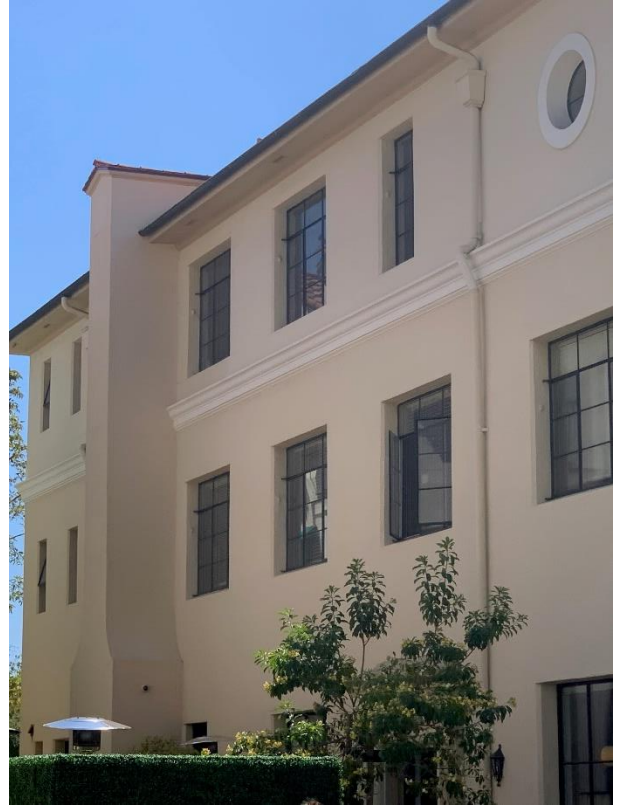


George Washington Smith, other local noted architects of Santa Barbara, the Community Drafting Room and the Allied Architectural Association of Los Angeles, demonstrated, through a public exhibition of drawings, how individual blocks of State Street could be reconstructed within the unifying Spanish Colonial Revival style. As part of El Pueblo Viejo and the commercial core of the City, the building embodies the vision of the early drawings as this 1951 mid-century interpretation of the Mediterranean style. The building sits across the street from the Large and commanding Central Library and diagonally across from the County Courthouse. This three story building also has a commanding presence on this corner, complementing the two landmarks that it faces across East Anapamu. The volume, height, massing, footprint and character-defining features demonstrate a mid-century interpretation of the early plans for downtown Santa Barbara. The building qualifies under criterion A as an excellent example of a mid-century interpretation of the Mediterranean style commercial building in El Pueblo Viejo Landmark District that is essential to the identity of Santa Barbara.

Criterion D. Its exemplification of a particular architectural style or way of life important to the City, the State or the Nation:

An important part of Santa Barbara's architecture, the Mediterranean pre-dates the Spanish Colonial Revival and was key to Santa Barbara's spirit as the new American Riviera. Having both a climate and geography similar to the coastal hill-towns of the European Riviera, Santa Barbara embraced the architecture well suited to the Santa Barbara lifestyle. This structure may qualify under Criterion D due to the following character-defining features:

- **Massing and form:** The general form of the mid-century interpretation of the Mediterranean style building is a rectangular or square box, three stories tall, with a hipped roof covered in terra-cotta tiles.
- **Wall Materials:** The mid-century, Mediterranean style building features smooth, whitewashed, planar, stucco walls, with the emphasis on broad, uninterrupted wall surfaces punctuated by careful use of openings.
- **Window Details:** The windows are recessed divided light, steel casement windows. The corners of the third floor feature round wood divided light windows.
- **Door Details:** The door facing East Anapamu Street features glass panel double doors recess into a surround featuring a stylized, art deco, dart pattern. The door facing Anacapa Street the doors recessed in the heavy door surround.



Criterion F. Its identification as the creation, design or work of a person or persons whose effort has significantly influenced the heritage of the City, the State or the Nation:

Architects, Winsor Soule, FAIA and John Frederic Murphy FAIA, were established architects in their own right before deciding to combine their talent to form one of Santa Barbara's most influential firms in 1921. In 1922, the firm received a commission to build Lincoln and Nelson elementary schools in Santa Barbara. So successful was their reception, that for the next 20 years, the firm would design many public elementary schools in Santa Barbara. These schools brought the Spanish Colonial Revival Style to the attention of the public. The Soule, Murphy and Hastings firm dissolved in 1926, when Hastings retired. After Hastings retirement, Soule and Murphy continued in partnership from 1926 to 1953. Soule and Murphy's work as architects helped play an important and pivotal role in developing a regional architectural style inspired by Santa Barbara's Spanish precedents and continues to be a defining feature of the city's architectural look and character. The firm contributed greatly to Santa



Barbara's architecture, designing both commercial and residential buildings and mastering multiple different styles, particularly Spanish Colonial Revival and Mediterranean. Winsor Soule, FAIA, was elevated into the college of Fellow of the American Institute of Architects in 1940 and John Frederic Murphy, FAIA was elevated into the college of Fellow of the American Institute of Architects in 1957.

Criterion G. Its embodiment of elements demonstrating outstanding attention to architectural design, detail, materials or craftsmanship:

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Work Cited:

Typical Santa Barbara Block by George Washington Smith, 1923, UCSB Art, Design, & Architecture Museum.

