

HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE REPORT

Prepared by Sebastian Herics, B.A, Historic Preservation Intern

Supervisor: Nicole Hernandez, M.F.A., City Architectural Historian

The Hollander Building

118 Chapala Street
Santa Barbara, CA



Figure 1 118 Chapala Street from: Herics, Sebastian, June 2021. The rest of the photos in this report are by the same author taken on the same day unless otherwise noted.

Designation Status: Contributing Property to a Historic District

Assessor Parcel Number: 033-074-011

Constructed: 1911

Historic Name: Hollander Building

Architect: Unknown

Builder: Unknown

Architectural Style: Secessionist Style

Property Type: Multi-Family Residence

Original Use: Women's clothing store

What makes this place historic?

The Hollander Building is historic because it lies within the proposed West Beach Historic District, and is a unique example of Secessionist style, a popular avant garde style in Europe that found only some audience in the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Chapala Street being one of very few streets in California to see the design grace its blocks.

The Secessionist style, is a kind of stripped classicism architecture. Classical designs are found throughout the property, including its columns, friezes, cornices, and blocky massing. The building is one of the few, if not the only, remaining example of stripped classicism applied to a commercial building in Santa Barbara. It should be noted that

118 Chapala Street has been placed on both the City of Santa Barbara's list of Potential Landmarks or Structures of Merit and has been selected for inclusion on the State Historic Resources Inventory.

The property lies within the proposed West Beach Historic District, which represents Santa Barbara's



Figure 3 The classical Doric columns, supporting a paneled frieze above.



Figure 2 The side of the building that leads to the other rooms in the complex.

residential and tourist development along the waterfront from 1900 through 1950. The district has an important collection of Spanish Colonial Revival multi-family residential buildings and courtyard apartment buildings. A portion of the district includes an area originally known as Burton Mound, an archeological site that was once the location of a prehistoric Chumash settlement. In the early 1900s, this same area was the site of the Potter Hotel, a large luxury resort. After the hotel was destroyed by a fire in 1921, the land was subsequently divided for multi-family residential use and became known as the Ambassador Tract. The district's contributing properties include residences, hotels/motels, and small commercial buildings. The district's predominant architectural style is Spanish Colonial Revival, with a few examples of other styles such as Arts and Crafts and Minimal Traditional (Community Development).

The structure in this report retains sufficient integrity to qualify for designation as a **Contributing Property** to the West Beach Historic District under Criteria 3. The building retains the majority of its character-defining elements, including its



Figure 4 The two-story tower of the building, with 'T' inlays, and squared corner posts atop. Note the bracketed cornice below that marks the first story, as well as the minimalistic cornice near the top of the windows.

square classical massing, doric columns, bas-relief ornamentation, transomed side-light windows, grouped divided-light transom casement windows, and middle-story cornice, therefore contributing to the visual and physical integrity of the District.

After its construction in 1911, the building was the location of a ladies furnishing shop, L. P. Hollander and Company, between 1912 and 1915 (City Directories 1912-1915). Between 1915 and 1918, the building was occupied by its owner, Frederick Junior, manager of the Potter Art Gallery. It is unclear as to whether this gallery was

located at 118 Chapala Street or at the Potter Hotel. In 1920, Alexis Podchernikoff, an artist, moved into the house. It is not clear as to whether this house was used as his residence, or a studio, or functioned as both. Regardless, Podchernikoff lived there for only one year (City Directories 1920-1922). In 1921, the adjacent Ambassador Hotel (formerly the Potter Hotel) burned to the ground, and the neighborhood, including 118 Chapala Street, lost its association with what had been Santa Barbara's largest and most exclusive resort hotel. At this point, the immediate neighborhood reverted to primarily a residential area. Between 1921 and 1923, the residents of 118 Chapala Street included: Edgar Goff, dentist (1922); Eric Ericson; G. B. Guen, yard master, Southern Pacific Railroad; and Mrs. Edith Harrison, widow (all 1923) (City Directories 1921-1923).

Property Description:

The footprint of the stuccoed triplex is an irregular compound plan with several recessions and projections off the rear (south) elevation. The multi-residential unit, built in 1911, varies in height from one to two stories. A building permit to erect a two-story frame and stucco building for \$3,200, issued on January 4, 1911, confirms the construction date (Building Permit Log, January 4, 1911; Architectural and Historic Resources Survey for the City of Santa Barbara, for 118 Chapala Street). The reductive design of the facade (north elevation) draws inspiration from the stripped classicism of the early Twentieth century Secessionist movement. This is particularly conspicuous in the elevated porch's employment of Doric columns and an entablature depicting a Doric



Figure 5 French doors and leaded transom window above a single-pane.



Figure 6 Another transom window with delicate leaded glass design.

frieze of triglyphs and metopes. The adjacent two-story cubic block is enhanced by the Secessionist Style schematic bas-relief ornamentation in the upper story. A projecting cornice runs the length of the facade, visually dividing the first and second floor of the two-story bay. Two decorative brackets support the bay's cornice. The flat roof's stuccoed railing and corner posts and deep overhanging eave cap the two-story bay. The harmonious balance of the two-story bay is enhanced by a symmetrically aligned fixed picture window at

ground level and three centrally placed leaded glass windows in the upper story. The porch's fenestration is comprised of fixed leaded glass picture windows centered in their respective wall areas and flanking a pair of ten-light French doors. A single fifteen-light French door is located perpendicular to the pair of French doors. The porch floor is tiled in terracotta pavers. A cast iron railing at the bottom of the porch is nicely detailed with several classically styled victory wreaths. A second story wood pergola surmounts the porch's flat roof. The bay's west elevation is almost entirely comprised of window openings, again centered in the wall areas. Neither the east nor the south elevation could be viewed. NOTE: This property was previously evaluated in the Mission Creek Survey. See those records for more information.

Historic Integrity:

"Integrity" is how well a historic place or resource represents the period or theme for which it is being recognized for. To prove "Integrity," researchers use the National Register of Historic Place's definition of "Integrity." For the National Register, Integrity is determined by the historic resource's Location, Design, Setting, Materials, Workmanship, Feeling, and Association (Integrity, 44). The Hollander Building maintains its integrity because it successfully conveys its unique 1911 appearance, contributing to the integrity of the West Beach Historic District.

Historical Significance:

"Historical Significance" is a term used by the city to call a place historical. A place earns "Historical Significance" if it meets one or all of the criteria listed below in the City of Santa Barbara. The Landmarks Commission and City Council decides whether or not, based on these criteria, if a historical place is a Historic Landmark or a Structure of Merit (Chapter 30.157). A place may also be historical as a Contributing property to a Landmark District, or a Historic District (Chapter 30.57). This building qualifies for designation as a historic **Contributing Property** to the West Beach Historic District because it:

~~Meets Criteria 1:~~ *It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution in our past;*

~~Meets Criteria 2:~~ *It is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;*

Meets Criteria 3: *It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, architectural style or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic or historic value, or represents a significant and distinguishable collection whose individual components may lack distinction;*

The property's Secessionist Style character represents the West Beach Historic District, which preserves the waterfront's commercial and residential developments from the 1900s and 1950s.

Secessionist style is a type of stripped classicism architecture popular before WWI. Mostly used in Europe, it can only be found in some parts of the United States. It was not as popular in California which, at that time, favored the Mission Revival and Italian Renaissance Revival styles. Secessionist features are expressed through the buildings:

- Cubic massing and stucco siding
- Bellyband cornice with brackets
- Two-story tower with squared corner posts, featuring 'T' inlays, simple cornice, and grouped transomed casement windows
- French doors for porch entrance, with leaded transoms above single-pane windows
- Use of tapering Doric columns supporting a paneled frieze

118 Chapala Street is one of the few, if not the only, remaining example of stripped classicism applied to a commercial building in Santa Barbara and even more so within the blocks of the West Beach Historic District.

The proposed West Beach Historic District represents Santa Barbara's residential and tourist development along the waterfront between 1900 and 1950. Spanish Colonial Revival, Craftsman, and Minimal Traditional styles line the sidewalks, creating a unique look and feel for each home, apartment, or courtyard complex that contributes to the District as a whole. And still aimed at visitors, the District's hotels, motels, and other small commercial buildings maintain a legacy of Santa Barbara tourism.

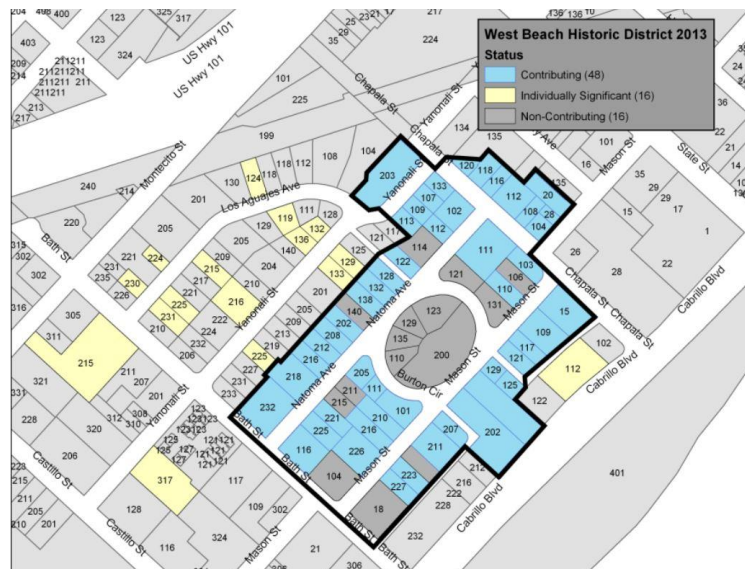


Figure 7 The West Beach Historic District from: Community Development.

The District is centered around the former Burton Mound, the curved roads of Burton Circle a remnant of one of the largest Chumash villages on the South Coast (Redmon). *Syuxtun* (translated to “Where the Trail Divides”) was roughly located between Chapala and Bath streets, the large mound serving as a local landmark, referred to as an ‘*amolomol*’ (“First People”; Cole, 1). The ‘*amolomol*’ had homes clustered around a fresh-water spring, and a huge cemetery on its southwestern slope with over 300 burials (Works Projects Administration, 122; Murray, 9). With an estimated 600 occupants in 1769, *Syuxtun* had virtually disappeared by the 1830s with colonization, but not before becoming the birthplace of the last Chumash chiefs of the South Coast (Redmon, “Burton”; Murray, 9).

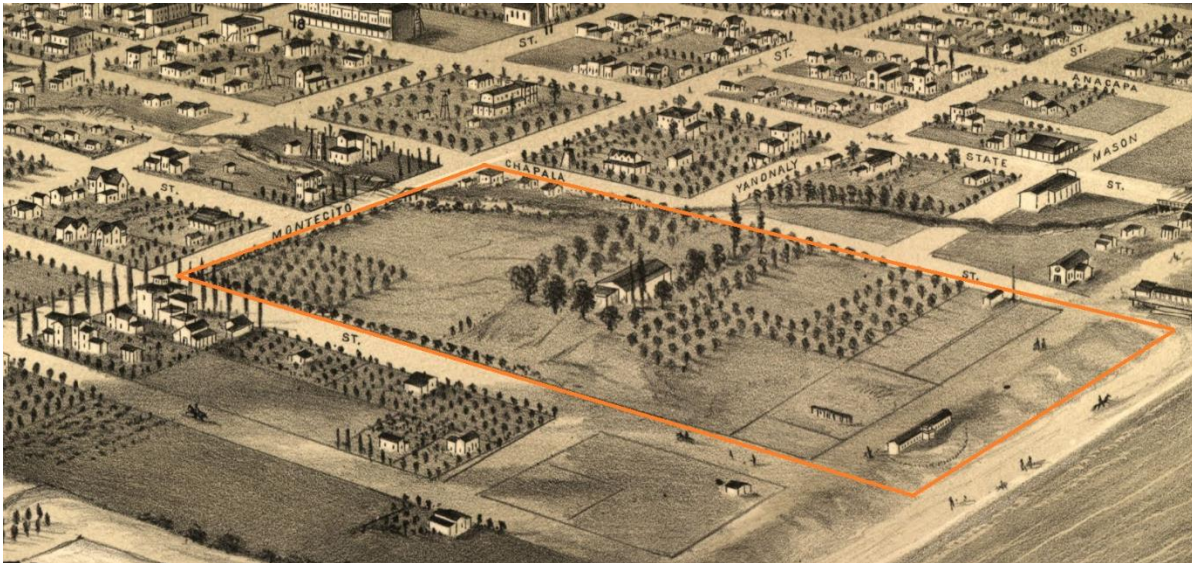


Figure 8 Bird's-eye view of Santa Barbara looking north in 1877. The orange box indicates the entire plot of Syuxtun-'Amolomol eventually purchased by Milo Potter in 1901, half of which now lies in the West Beach Historic District. From: "Potter Hotel Company," Pacific Coast Architecture Database. <http://pcad.lib.washington.edu/building/3802/>.

Syuxtun-‘*Amolomol*’ was dubbed *el Puerto de Santa Barbara* by the Spanish, since ships would anchor offshore and row in with settlers and supplies to the beach in front of the District in the 1780s. With completion of the Santa Barbara Mission and Spanish military fort (El Presidio), the Mission took ownership over the site. The land remained largely undeveloped in Spanish hands. With Mexican independence from Spain and the secularization of the Missions in 1822, former Spanish lands (like the District) were granted to Mexican citizens (Kyle, 409).

The District was owned by a series of naturalized immigrants seeking fortune in California, from otter hunters to sea captains and ranchers. The land was granted to the Irishmen-turned-Mexican James (Santiago) Burke, who was appointed *regidor*, or city commissioner, of Santa Barbara in 1836 (“James Walter Burke”). Burke sold his grant to New Englander Joseph Chapman in 1833, who arrived in California by escape from the pirate crew of Hippolyte de Bouchard in 1818 when they raided California, Santa Barbara included (Tompkins, 25-27; “Hippolyte de Bouchard”). Though Chapman may have constructed a small adobe home atop the ‘*amolomol*’ after his naturalization as a Mexican citizen, it might have been expanded by mariner Thomas Robins who later owned the site, as well as Captain George Nidever in the 1840s and 50s. The land was eventually purchased, after a series of owners, by Tennessean Otter Hunter and rancher Lewis T. Burton in 1860, the first mayor of Santa Barbara when it



Figure 9 The undeveloped beachfront, with Stearns Wharf from: Reed, N.H., *Panoramic of Santa Barbara Coastline*, ca. 1892. Edson Smith Photo Collection, Black Gold Cooperative Library System.

<https://calisphere.org/item/442d0b055253434c7913efb519cec7ef/>.

came under American control in 1850 (Kyle, 409; Tompkins, 61-64). By the time Burton's name was affixed to the 'amolomol when he passed in 1879, Burton Mound had been owned by Mexican-naturalized Americans for nearly half a century.

The Burton Mound came to be a waterfront landmark as the city sought expansion under American annexation in 1850. Steamers and sailing ships would anchor miles off shore, like the Spanish before them, and row in passengers, mail, and freight to the sands in front of the West Beach Historic District too. A small pier was constructed at the foot of Chapala

Street in 1868, at the edge of the District, to make the beachfront more hospitable. It proved too small. It would be John Stearns who opened Santa Barbara to freight and passengers when the wharf he funded opened in 1872 (Cole, 4).

Stearns timed it perfectly. By the 1870s and through the 80s, promotional materials had gushed over the fair breezes and bath houses that had cropped up along West Beach near the District, with its promenades to stroll along or fields to horseback ride and race. Tourists were trickling in from the East Coast, landing at the wharf for seasonal stays inland at the Arlington Hotel. When Santa Barbara was connected by rail to Los Angeles by the Southern Pacific in 1887, the waterfront wasn't just a place of arrival anymore, but a lucrative area for a growing tourist industry (Murray, 10). This is why when Burton passed away in 1879, Syuxtun-'Amolomol was quickly purchased by the Seaside Hotel Association with the intention of constructing a hotel (Kyle, 409). It wasn't until the twentieth century, however, that the land would be fully developed with a new railroad link.



Figure 10 The adobe atop the 'amolomol that served as a waterfront landmark for seventy years from: *Luis Burton Adobe*, ca. 1901. Edson Smith Photo Collection, Santa Barbara Public Library.

<http://www.luna.blackgold.org/luna/servlet/detail/blackgold~9~9~524~2283#>.



Figure 11 The Potter Hotel to the left marks the West Beach Historic District, still catered to tourism today, from: *Santa Barbara Bay from the Bath House*, ca. 1905. California Historical Society Collection, 1860-1960, University of Southern California. <https://calisphere.org/item/556dec63513db4598e4b33b647ea992b/>.

When the long-awaited Southern Pacific rail connected Santa Barbara to San Francisco in 1901, the City began to value the waterfront more than ever (Cole, 10). With Bay Area aristocracy steaming into town by ship and rail, the City convinced Los Angeles hotelier Milo Potter to purchase the 36 undeveloped acres of Syuxtun-‘Amolomol to build a first-class tourist destination (Murray, 10). The ‘amolomol was flattened and its springs capped for Potter’s resort, as was the old adobe that had been standing since the 1840s on top of the generationally-packed mound (Murray, 11).

When the Potter Hotel opened its doors in 1903, it had 600 guest rooms at the ready for months-long stays, 23 acres of gardens, and was entirely self-sustaining with its own cold storage plants, bakeries, and employee housing. The hotel also

had its own vegetable crop, poultry farm, and country club that included a race track, polo grounds, and golf course near Hope Ranch (Murray, 11). It breathed luxury. By 1906, the train station (still used today) was built right behind the Potter, with a flower-lined path leading guests to the counter. The Depot even had spurs adjacent to the station for storing private coaches, not too different in wealth than having a hotel hanger for a guest’s private jet today (Cole, 10). Carnegie and Vanderbilt graced the halls, as did local philanthropists like Max Fleischmann and Frederick Peabody. In no small way, the Potter attracted some of Santa



Figure 12 The grandiose Potter Hotel, built right on top of the Burton Mound from: *Postcard view of the Potter Hotel, CA*, M. Rieder, ca. 1910. Pacific Coast Architecture Database. <http://pcad.lib.washington.edu/building/3802/>.

Barbara's major philanthropists that would shape the look and feel of the city for the entire century (Murray, 11). Yet as all golden ages go, the hotel's didn't last.

Automobiles spelled the end of seasonal Victorian tourism, steamships, and railroads, and the Potter grew outdated following World War One (1914-1918). The hotel's draw of long-stays was demanded less as auto-courts, motels, and road improvements altered the tourism industry. The resort was sold off and renamed the Belvedere in 1919, and sold again and renamed the Ambassador (Murray, 11). The end came in October of 1921, as Milo Potter watched his \$2 million dollar hotel burned to the ground, luckily without any deaths or injuries. Rumors of arson floated, but remain unconfirmed ("What is the story..."). Syuxtun-'Amolomol was empty once again, and as Santa Barbara's population increased by half from 1920 to '30, the land was purchased as the Ambassador Tract for housing and tourism (Murray, 12).

The City was able to purchase a small portion of the tract, today named Ambassador Park, when the land was subdivided in 1924. The palm trees that line the park are from the hotel days of the land. Zoned for multi-family residential use, the area was well suited for the city-promoted Spanish Colonial Revival style after the 1925 earthquake. Most lots were for single family homes, but often a single-family residence was placed facing the street to conceal units behind, which filled the parcel. Minimal Traditional, Craftsman Bungalow, and one rare example of Streamline Moderne were also constructed in the Tract, some of which are included in the Historic District (Murray, 12).



Figure 13 The waterfront in the 1940s from: *Santa Barbara Waterfront*, ca. 1944. Edson Smith Photo Collection, Black Gold Cooperative Library System. <https://calisphere.org/item/841157e05bd8b7e3dba6e507b8aee102/>.

The District also contains commercial buildings and motels, created throughout the 1930s and 40s to meet the needs of the auto-tourist. By the 1970s, tourism was cited as the best use of the

waterfront in Santa Barbara (12, Murray). Thus, the West Beach Historic District represents not only Chumash roots and colonization by European powers and American pioneers, but the legacy of Santa Barbara's geographic escapism that defined the use of the District and its structures that still stand today—including the one in this report—constructed between 1900 and 1950.

~~Meets Criteria 4:~~ *It yields, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history; or*

~~Meets Criteria 5:~~ *Its unique location or singular physical characteristic represents an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood.*

Works Cited

- Cole, Alexandra C. *Greetings from the Santa Barbara Waterfront, Historic Context*. Santa Barbara, Preservation Planning Associates for the Historic Architectural Survey Training Class, Autumn 1999. <https://www.santabarbaraca.gov/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?blobid=34381>.
- Community Development, City of Santa Barbara. *Proposed West Beach Historic District*. <https://www.santabarbaraca.gov/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?BlobID=35956>.
- “Hippolyte de Bouchard and His Attacks on the California Missions,” *militarymuseum.org*. Accessed 16 June 2021. <http://www.militarymuseum.org/deBouchard.html>.
- “How to Evaluate the Integrity of a Property” in *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, National Register Bulletin NRB 15, https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/upload/NRB-15_web508.pdf.
- “James Walter Burke,” *findagrave.com*. 23 Aug 2019, accessed 16 June 2021. <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/202384065/james-walter-burke>.
- Kyle, Douglas et al. *Historic Spots in California*. Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2002.
- Murray, Fermina B. *Historic Structures/Sites Report: 15 Chapala Street, Villa Rosa Inn*. Goleta, Consultant Historian, Oct. 2016. https://www.santabarbaraca.gov/SBdocuments/Advisory_Groups/Historic_Landmarks_Commission/Archive/2016_Archives/04_Historic_%20Structures_-_Sites_Reports/2016-11-02_November_2_2016_15_Chapala_St_HSSR_10-17-2016.pdf.
- Redmon, Michael. “What is the story behind the Potter Hotel fire?” *The Independent*, 3 Aug. 2006. <https://www.independent.com/2006/08/03/q-what-is-story-behind-potter-hotel-fire/>.
- “Where was Burton Mound?” *The Independent*, 1 Aug. 2009. <https://www.independent.com/2009/08/01/where-was-burton-mound/>.
- “Santa Barbara’s First People – Santa Barbara, CA,” *waymarking.com*. 25 April 2013.

https://www.waymarking.com/waymarks/WMGYX2_Santa_Barbaras_First_People_Santa_Barbara_CA.

Tompkins, Walker A. *Santa Barbara History Makers*. Santa Barbara, McNally & Loftin Publishers, 1983.

Works Project Administration. *Santa Barbara: A Guide to the Channel City and Its Environs*. New York, Hastings House, 1941.