

**NORTH BEACH PLACE**

Bounded by Bay Street, Mason Street, Francisco Street, & Columbus  
Avenue  
San Francisco  
San Francisco County  
California

**HABS CA-2727  
CA-2727**

HABS  
CA 2727

**PHOTOGRAPHS**

**WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA**

**HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
PACIFIC GREAT BASIN SUPPORT OFFICE  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
600 Harrison Street  
San Francisco, CA 94103**

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

**North Beach Place  
Bay Street, Mason Street, Francisco  
Street, & Columbus Avenue  
San Francisco  
San Francisco County  
California**

**HABS No. CA-2727**

**Location:** 401-575 Bay Street, 500-650 Francisco Street, and 1120 Columbus Avenue (two city blocks bounded by Francisco Street, Bay Street, Mason Street, Jones Street, and Columbus Avenue)

U.S.G.S. San Francisco North 7.5' Quadrangle

**Present owner:** San Francisco Housing Authority

**Present use:** Demolished during December 2001 to January 2003

**Most recent use:** Public housing project

**Significance:** North Beach Place was a public housing project that occupied two city blocks in the North Beach neighborhood of San Francisco for fifty years. Designed in 1941-1942, delayed by World War II, and constructed in 1950-1952, it was one of the early housing projects in the city. Originally, occupancy was intended to be restricted to Caucasians, according to a neighborhood patterning policy then in place; but a successful lawsuit by the NAACP overturned this policy. For many years the housing project was occupied by a mix of Asian, African-American, and Caucasian residents. Generally harmonious relations existed among residents, staff, and the surrounding neighborhood until the crack cocaine epidemic of the mid-1980s. The project has long had ties with a non-profit service organization, the Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Center.

Architecturally, the housing project was an early example of modernism in San Francisco. Strongly horizontal in its lines, with balconies curved at the corners, and nearly devoid of ornament, the buildings that make up this project were a blend of the Streamlined Moderne and International styles.

## **I. PHYSICAL CONTEXT OF NORTH BEACH PLACE**

North Beach Place was an anomaly in the North Beach neighborhood where it was located. North Beach was first developed during the early decades after the Gold Rush, and consisted mainly of residences and businesses situated on small, urban lots. The more northern part of the neighborhood, where North Beach Place would ultimately be built, also possessed a few industrial buildings. Although the neighborhood was entirely destroyed in the earthquake and fire of 1906, it was rebuilt along somewhat similar lines, with flats and small apartment buildings. These post-earthquake buildings were largely wood frame in construction, with classical ornamentation. The great majority of these still stand, resulting in a largely-uniform appearance to the neighborhood.

Many of these small lots were assembled to provide a site for the construction of North Beach Place. As institutional housing covering two city blocks, North Beach Place bore little relation to the neighborhood around it.

## **II. HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF NORTH BEACH PLACE**

North Beach Place represented a departure from the historical pattern of development that preceded it. The earliest available Sanborn map, from 1886, reveals that the two blocks were sparsely developed with houses, a few sheds for storing drain pipes, and a vacant sulfur works. In 1899 the blocks were more fully developed, with many new residences, an expanded pipe storage facility, and the warehouse and cannery of Fontana and Company. After the blocks were cleared by fire in 1906, they were replaced by another mix of housing and industrial buildings, with the latter predominating. The California Fruit Cannery's Association, successor to Fontana, and precursor to Del Monte, built a new warehouse and cannery at 540-598 Francisco and a box warehouse at 2450 Taylor. The City Electric Company built a cylindrical oil tank on the 400 block of Bay Street, a soap factory was built at 599 Bay, a stamp mill was built for the California Ore Testing Company at 591 Bay, and a creamery was built at 535 Bay. Amid these industrial uses were a modest number of houses, flats, sheds, and small storefronts.

North Beach Place had no historical relation to these earlier patterns of development. Its historical context derives, instead, from the development of public housing in the United States and in San Francisco.

### The Early History of Housing Project Construction in the United States

The impetus for government intervention in the housing market is generally thought to have begun in the mid-nineteenth century, with cries by reformers to do something about the slums of lower Manhattan. The nation's first tenement reform law was passed in New York in 1867, and state legislatures subsequently passed similar laws as a response to tenement conditions in Boston, Chicago and Philadelphia. Resistance to these laws by property owners was great, and enforcement of them was poor, with the result that conditions in urban slums remained scandalous. In his book *How the Other Half Lives*,

Jacob Riis publicized slum conditions in Manhattan in the late nineteenth century, urged the passage of effective laws, advocated the tearing-down of the worst neighborhoods, and promoted education and health measures for children.

The result of Riis's efforts was a study, funded by Congress in 1892, of slums in the nation's sixteen largest cities. A commission created by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1902 recommended intervention by the government regarding housing standards. These studies resulted in no action, but they were the federal government's first involvement in the issue of housing for the poor.

Federal action came for the first time during World War I. This action was not taken on behalf of the abjectly poor, but to create housing for workers in shipyards and ammunition manufacturing centers. The government either built, or made loans to private corporations to build, over twenty thousand units of housing during the war. At the end of the war the government dismantled the programs that had made this housing construction possible. The precedent, however, had been set.

Before the war, a woman named Edith Elmer Wood had advocated the elimination of slums in Washington, D.C. After the war she promoted low-interest and federally-guaranteed loans for housing construction, and the construction by the government of low-rent public housing. Her efforts did not bear fruit until the Depression, but were widely publicized.

Other forces were also involved in shaping the debate on public housing. A group called the Regional Planning Association of America (RPAA), including writers Lewis Mumford and Catherine Bauer, brought an awareness of European housing trends to America. These trends included the Garden City movement, International style architecture, and large-scale European housing developments. All of these would be incorporated into public and private housing developments in America.

In Vienna in the 1920s, the Social Democrat government initiated an extremely ambitious program of public housing. Nearly ten percent of the city's population was housed by this program by the 1930s. Germany went further, using the latest architectural styles and materials, and adopting a site plan called Zeilenbau, in which parallel rows of apartment buildings were arranged in superblocs. In a modest way, these site planning principles would be adopted for North Beach Place.

These, and other European developments, were publicized by Catherine Bauer in her writings. She also co-curated a display on modern housing at the influential "Modern Architecture International Exhibition" at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, in 1932.

The Depression created pressure, not so much for government-subsidized housing, but for unemployment relief. This pressure resulted in the passage of the Public Works Administration (PWA) in 1933, with an appropriation of \$3.3 billion to finance construction across the United States. While the PWA legislation was being formulated,

housing activists persuaded Senator Robert F. Wagner of New York to include an authorization to build low-cost housing, and for slum clearance, in the bill. Thus, the construction of housing became one means of putting unemployed construction workers to work. For the first time, the federal government became an instrument of providing housing for the poor.

Under the PWA, low-rent housing could be built in one of three ways. The PWA could build housing itself. It could make loans to limited-dividend corporations who would then build housing. Finally, it could grant funds to local agencies, which would then build the housing. From the late-1930s onward, the latter method became by far the most popular way to build subsidized housing for the poor using federal funds. Accordingly, “housing authorities” were formed by cities across the United States as a way of accepting federal money, and overseeing the construction of housing projects.

The involvement of local governments became necessary when, in 1935, a federal court ruled that the federal government could not acquire property for eminent domain for the purpose of slum clearance. In 1936 another court decision ruled that local governments could use federal funds to condemn private property. Since slum clearance became a key component of housing project construction in urban areas, local governments became the preferred instruments for building housing projects with federal money.

Another impetus toward local control came from Catherine Bauer. In her 1934 book *Modern Housing*, she criticized the Roosevelt administration for its timid approach toward demolishing slums and replacing them with an equal number of living units. Local governments, she and others argued, would be more aggressive in pursuing these aims.

One result of this move toward decentralization was that housing projects were invariably designed by local architects working for local housing authorities to satisfy local needs. This was in contrast with post offices, federal courthouses, and other federally-funded buildings, which were designed by the Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department, or by local architects under federal supervision.

Labor became an important player in the development of public housing. In 1935 the American Federation of Labor urged that large-scale housing be constructed. There was a considerable amount of opposition from the political right, but advocates for public housing emerged triumphant.

In 1937 Congress passed the Housing Act, creating a permanent program for building public housing. All new housing projects would be built under guidance by a new federal agency, the United States Housing Authority (USHA). The USHA would make sixty-year loans to local housing authorities, which would build the projects. Involvement of the federal government in the housing industry, once considered anathema, now became commonplace.

While a steady supply of funding was assured, new projects would not be lavish. Strict cost guidelines were written into the Housing Act. Stylistically, housing projects would be designed under the philosophy of “functional modernism.” Many projects reflected the Bauhaus school prevalent in Europe, in which ornament was absent. When projects were designed in traditional styles, such as Colonial Revival, or Spanish Colonial Revival, they were stripped down, severely restrained examples of these styles. This practice was in part a result of budgetary restrictions; it was also indicative of the modern, European tastes of Catherine Bauer and other “cutting edge” proponents of public housing.

While some early housing projects were modest in size (under 100 units), others were huge. At the latter projects, the design emphasis was simply a matter of density. Some projects in New York, Chicago, Pittsburgh, and Philadelphia were from 1000 to over 3100 units in size. In order to achieve these numbers, the buildings in some projects were several stories or higher. Standardization of design, with many buildings in a project receiving identical architectural treatments, became the norm. An effort was made, however, to preserve the Garden City ideal of open space, landscaping, and curved boulevards. The Ida B. Wells Homes in Chicago (1662 units completed in 1941), included a park within its boundaries. The landscaping of North Beach Place, minimal though it was, probably resulted from a desire to incorporate an element of Garden City principles.

With the advent of World War II, the emphasis switched from building housing for the poor to building housing for war industry workers. A new federal agency, the Federal Public Housing Authority, was created to replace the USHA and to facilitate the rapid construction of wartime housing projects. Many or most of these housing projects were built through local housing authorities, just as those before the war had been. In the city of Alameda, California, for example, nine housing projects totaling over five thousand units were built during 1943-1945 to house shipyard workers. All of them were built under the aegis of the Alameda Housing Authority. In Oakland, a housing project containing seventy large buildings, Auditorium Village, was constructed for war industry workers near the estuary. In San Francisco, one housing project was built for shipyard workers near Hunter’s Point. Tremendous complexes for shipyard workers were also built at Vallejo, Richmond, and Marin City, some by the federal government and some by private industry. The buildings in these projects were built hurriedly and were intended to be temporary in nature. A concern for Garden City principles and other aesthetics vanished during wartime; the only standards were large numbers of units, and speed in construction. While most of these housing projects were demolished soon after the war, many were retained by local housing authorities in order to house the poor.

#### The Early History of Housing Project Construction in San Francisco

In 1938, Catherine Bauer moved to the Bay Area to accept a teaching post at the University of California. As the author of *Modern Housing*, co-author of the Housing Act, and a famous planner with social connections, she quickly became very influential in shaping local opinions regarding public housing. Indeed, many architects and planners

became imbued with a spirit of enthusiasm regarding the social importance of this kind of work.

Also in 1938, San Francisco formed a housing authority, becoming the first city in California to do so. Its executive director was an architect, Albert J. Evers, who had designed apartment buildings in the 1920s. The federal government immediately promised the city fifteen million dollars to build housing projects. Very quickly, the city began planning for eleven housing projects scattered through nine neighborhoods. The projects ranged in size from 118 units to 772 units, and would total 2855 units. The people chosen to design these projects ranged from such established architects as Arthur Brown, Jr., John Bakewell, Jr., Frederick H. Meyer, and Lewis Hobart, who had been active since the beginning of the century, to younger ones who began working in the 1920s and 1930s.

This ambitious program was only half completed when the United States' entry into World War II caused a postponement. Five of the projects were built during 1939-1942, five were built after the war, and one was never built.

The first housing project in San Francisco to be completed was Holly Court, on Bernal Heights, in 1939. It consisted of 118 units in ten buildings clustered tightly over 2.68 acres. The architect was Arthur Brown, Jr., who had designed the City Hall and other monuments of Beaux Arts architecture. Devoid of ornament, save for some latticework around the entrances, Holly Court was nevertheless almost traditional in its form. The individual entries and stoops made the two-story project resemble a series of townhouses. Decades would pass before the Housing Authority would plan another project this intimate in scale.

The next four projects to be built were monumental by comparison. Potrero Terrace, on the east side of Potrero Hill, was designed by Frederick H. Meyer, John Bakewell, Jr., and Warren C. Perry, and was completed in about 1941. Its 469 units occupied thirty-eight three-story buildings spread over seventeen acres. The site planning in some ways resembled the superb block plan of the German Zeilenbau projects. The hipped roofs covered with Spanish tiles were traditional in appearance, but otherwise the aesthetic presaged the Brutalist style of the 1960s. When the hillside was graded prior to construction, the soil was scraped away, exposing the serpentine rock of Potrero Hill. Two of the streets running through the project had curved segments, perhaps in a tentative attempt to relate to Garden City principles, but the lack of vegetation resulted in a barren appearance.

Sunnydale, completed at the same time in Visitation Valley, contained 772 units in ninety buildings spread over forty-nine acres. Designed by Albert Roller and Roland Stringham, the two-story buildings were restrained Streamlined Moderne in style. Curvilinear streets and individual lawns for each unit hearkened to the Garden City movement, but the identical appearance of so many buildings over such a large area resulted in a certain monotony.

Westside Court, in the Western Addition, was completed in about 1942. It consisted of 136 units in six buildings arranged in a single city block of 2.60 acres. Designed by Lester W. Hurd and James H. Mitchell, it was designed in the International style, and was thus the most modern of the pre-World War II housing projects in appearance.

Valencia Gardens was completed in 1942 or 1943 in the Mission district. It consisted of 246 units spread over five acres. The twenty-two buildings in this project were built adjacent to each other, or were separated by narrow passages, forming a serpentine pattern, with courtyards between the buildings. Designed by Harry A. Thomsen, Jr. and William Wurster, the project was a blend of Streamlined Moderne and International styles. Thomas Church arranged plantings around the mostly-concrete courts. Benny Bufano created several very fine sculptures for the courtyards, as rental payment for his apartment in the project.

In 1942, the city of San Francisco decided that all five of these housing projects would be segregated racially, according to a "neighborhood pattern" plan. Under this plan, the existing racial pattern in the neighborhood of the project would determine which race of people would inhabit a housing project. Westside Court, in the Western Addition, was populated by African-Americans, while all of the other projects had white tenants. Of the remaining projects that were delayed by the war, it was intended that one, Ping Yuen, would be occupied by Chinese, while the others would be occupied by whites.

The onset of World War II caused the United States to withdraw funding for all permanent housing projects in San Francisco that were not yet built. As Westside Court and Valencia Gardens had been substantially constructed by the time the war started, a decision was made to complete them with little delay. The other six projects, however, were postponed until after the end of the war.

As mentioned above, the federal government did decide to build a temporary housing project in San Francisco during World War II. It was located at Hunter's Point, or at Candlestick Point, and was dedicated to the use of wartime construction workers. It was not one of the eleven projects originally planned in 1939-1941. The exact location of this project, and the number of units it had, is unknown.

For the sake of completeness, the six permanent housing projects that were delayed by World War II are listed below:

North Beach Place, 226 units on 4.60 acres in the North Beach neighborhood. The architects were Henry Gutterson and Ernest Born.

Bernal Dwellings, 201 units on 4.47 acres in the Mission district. This International style project was designed by William G. Merchant and Clarence Tantau.

DeHaro Plaza, 135 units on 4.82 acres adjoining Potrero Terrace, on Potrero Hill. The architects were Douglas Dacre Stone and Charles E.J. Rogers.

Hunter's View, 150 units on 22.78 acres at Hunter's Point. This project, as originally designed by Lewis Hobart and Timothy Pflueger, resembled a collection of cottages and cottage-like duplexes, set amid expansive lawns. It was the project closest to the Garden City ideal.

Ping Yuen, 231 units on 2.62 acres on Pacific Avenue, in Chinatown. This project, designed by Mark Daniels and Henry T. Howard, was an International style complex with some perfunctory Chinese architectural imagery.

Glen Craggs, 171 units on 29.1 acres in the Glen Park neighborhood. No architectural rendering of this project, designed by Wilbur D. Peugh and Edward B. Page, has been found. The project was never built due to neighborhood opposition.

Later in the 1950s, and into the 1970s, housing project construction was vastly increased in San Francisco when the Redevelopment Agency condemned dozens of blocks of Victorian and Edwardian-era housing in the Western Addition, to be replaced by public housing. Although that story is beyond the scope of this report, it is a dramatic one that deserves to be told.

### **III. SPECIFIC HISTORY OF NORTH BEACH PLACE**

The North Beach Place housing project was designed during 1941-1942, and the site was acquired by eminent domain at the same time, but construction was delayed by World War II. In October 1945 the project went out for bid, but due to the scarcity and high cost of building materials, construction was delayed again. The site was finally cleared of old buildings in 1949. The plans were revised then to take into account recent changes to the building code, and the buildings were erected during 1950-1952. The first units opened in September 1952, and the housing project was completed a few months later.

The post-war financing and construction of the housing project will be related in some detail below, after a discussion of the architects and landscape architect.

#### The Designers

North Beach Place was designed by architects Henry Gutterson and Ernest Born in their only known collaboration. In some ways it was an unlikely pairing, for Gutterson had long worked in traditional styles, and was near the end of his career when the project was built; while Born was a modernist near the beginning of his career.

The landscape architect was Thomas Church, the structural engineer was August V. Saph, the mechanical engineer was Clyde E. Bentley, and the firm of Dames and Moore, geologists and foundation engineers, studied the foundation conditions.

It is worth noting that Gutterson, Born, and Church all had strong connections with the University of California at Berkeley. All three graduated from the University. Born and

Church taught at the University, and Gutterson worked briefly for John Galen Howard, who ran the architecture program there.

*Henry Gutterson (1884-1954)*

Gutterson was born in Minnesota and moved to Berkeley, California in his youth. He attended the University of California from 1903-1906 and the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris from 1906-1909. After working briefly in New York, he returned to Berkeley to work on the design of the Panama Pacific International Exposition, for the City of Oakland, and for John Galen Howard. He attained his architect's license in 1913, and in 1914 opened his own office in San Francisco. Until near the end of his life he maintained an architectural office in San Francisco and lived in Berkeley. The great majority of his work can be found in these two cities.

Of his approximately 150 known commissions, over 120 were for houses. Many of these are difficult to classify by style, as he took elements from different styles and blended them into harmonious compositions. The English cottage, medieval half-timbered, Swiss chalet, craftsman, and colonial revival are the most common style elements in his houses. Although his influences were numerous, these houses had a common quality, being generally quiet, or understated, in feeling. All, or nearly all, are in gardened settings on large lots. These large lots allowed for creative plans, such as (in one case) wings that project at right angles from a polygonal corner, or (in another) a U-shaped house that wraps around a garden terrace. Predominantly stucco exterior walls, with some wooden elements, were common in his houses. Some houses, however, were clad entirely in wood shingles or board-and-batten. Some houses have steeply pitched slate roofs, or oversized projecting bays. Leaded glass windows, French doors, and carved wooden roof beams are some of the decorative elements in his homes. More than sixty of his residential commissions can be found in Berkeley. At least fifty are in the St. Francis Wood neighborhood of San Francisco. Of his known houses, the earliest is Gutterson's own home in Berkeley (1912).

Gutterson garnered the St. Francis Wood commissions by virtue of his role as supervising architect for the subdivision. The developer of the tract, the Mason-McDuffie company, had hired architect John Galen Howard and the Boston landscape architects, Olmsted Brothers, to plan the subdivision in 1912; and Louis Christian Mullgardt was hired to design the model home; but Gutterson served as supervising architect from 1916 until his death in 1954. He was responsible for ensuring that new homes conformed to the design covenants of the neighborhood.

The best-known of Gutterson's residential commissions is the Rose Walk in Berkeley. This is a complex of four duplexes and three houses on a hillside property bisected by a public walkway. The duplexes are reminiscent of the Swiss chalet style. Most of the Rose Walk buildings were built in the 1920s. The last was built in 1935.

Gutterson also designed houses in Oakland, Piedmont, Kentfield, Belvedere, Nicasio, Hillsborough, Atherton, Carmel, Chico, and Hollywood. These houses range in dates

from the 1920s until the year of his death, and in style from Period Revival to modern. The Digby Brooks complex, at 1717 Vallejo Street in San Francisco, is an outstanding collection of cottages inspired by medieval forms.

Several of Gutterson's institutional buildings are notable. The Camp Fire Girls Headquarters on Arguello Street, San Francisco (1929) is rustic in feeling. His Jefferson School, on Rose Street in Berkeley (1921), is sprawling in plan, resembling a collection of connected stucco houses. The four buildings that comprise the Berkeley High School (designed with William Corlett, Jr.; relief sculptures by Jacques Schnier and Robert Howard; 1939-1950) are a notable Art Deco complex. Gutterson's Vedanta Society temples in Berkeley (1939) and San Francisco (1953) are Romanesque and Art Deco, respectively, in style.

Gutterson was a member of the Christian Science church and designed many important buildings for this religious denomination. His Second Church of Christ, Scientist, on Spruce Street in Berkeley (1926), is Romanesque in style. The Ninth Church of Christ, Scientist, at 175 Junipero Serra in San Francisco, is classically-styled and monumental in scale. Arden Woods (1929-1930), a sanitarium built for the Christian Science Church in San Francisco's West Portal neighborhood, is known for its very high, steeply sloped roof. For his own congregation, the First Church of Christ, Scientist in Berkeley, Gutterson designed a Sunday school and office wing in 1927-1929, as an addition to the 1910 church building by Bernard Maybeck. Gutterson also designed Christian Science churches in Redwood City (1929), Napa, Sacramento (1939), Santa Barbara, and Santa Rosa (1953).

In the last year of his life, as he was dying of cancer, Gutterson closed his office and moved from Berkeley to his sister's home in St. Francis Wood. He made the basement into a studio and continued working until the end of his life.

Although Gutterson worked in modern styles in his last years, North Beach Place is much more spare in detailing than anything he had designed through 1940. Accordingly, it seems likely that the main inspiration for the design of the housing project came from Ernest Born.

*Ernest Born (1898-1992)*

Born was raised in San Francisco and had his own firm in that city from 1937 into the 1980s. Despite the longevity of his career, relatively few of his designs were constructed. Besides designing, Born taught architecture, wrote books, served on boards and commissions, and produced many paintings and architectural renderings.

Born studied architecture at the University of California in Berkeley, attaining a bachelor's degree in 1922 and a master's in 1923. His thesis, "The Relation of Painting to Architecture," reflected his love of architectural art and prefigured the direction his career would take.

For five years after his graduation Born traveled in Europe, and from 1928-1931 he worked for architectural firms in New York City. From 1931-1936 he had his own practice in New York. While in that city he also served on the editorial staff of *Architectural Record* and *Architectural Forum*, the two most important architectural journals in the country.

Upon his return to San Francisco from New York he opened an architectural office at 802 Montgomery Street, in the gold rush bank building built by William Tecumseh Sherman. Among Born's early commissions were two houses built in Frenchman's Road on the Stanford University campus (1939 and 1947). The older of these is an International style house with horizontal siding. The other has vertical board-and-batten siding and shed roofs, and was described in a recent book on the university as "a distinctive example of the Bay Area style popularized by William Wurster and other architects." (Joncas, et. al., p. 78.)

Born's own house at 2020 Great Highway (1950-1951), with its vertical redwood siding, flat roof, and spare window openings, is considered a landmark of modernism. Sally Woodbridge described it as "unpretentious but crisply detailed" and thought it was "one of the best examples of the Bay Area version of the International Style." (Woodbridge, pages 170-171, with photo.)

In the 1960s and 1970s, Born performed a great deal of design work for the Bay Area Rapid Transit system (BART). He designed two of the San Francisco BART stations, at Glen Park and Balboa Park, in collaboration with the firm of Corlett and Spackman. He also designed the signage for the BART system. The architect Vernon DeMars states that Born very likely designed the elevated BART tracks, i.e. the "hexagonal column and the shape of all the elements that support the trains." (DeMars.)

A 1957 addition to the Greek Theater on the University of California, Berkeley campus, houses in Richmond and San Carlos, the North Beach Place housing project, the California State Fair in Sacramento, and a small number of commercial buildings rounds out the list of his known buildings.

Realized architectural projects were just one aspect of Born's career. His art projects and proposals were as highly regarded as were his buildings. He produced murals for the San Francisco Building at the Golden Gate International Exposition (1939) on Treasure Island, drawings of a proposed United Nations Center on San Francisco Bay (with William Wurster, 1945), pastels of a proposed park between the Ferry Building and the Embarcadero Freeway (1955), a proposal for a complex of buildings on Alcatraz, industrial and architectural advertising, lithographs, and other art works. The United Nations drawings were exhibited at the San Francisco Museum of Art and the Museum of Modern Art in New York. In 1982, fifty-five of his drawings were exhibited at the AIA/SF.

His published works include *The Barns of the Abbey of Beaulieu* (1965) and *The Plan of St. Gall* (1979), both medieval studies co-authored with Walter Horn. The latter is a

massive, three-volume work and was very highly regarded. Much earlier, Born also assembled much of the material for his wife Esther Born's book, *The New Architecture in Mexico* (1937).

Born was a professor of architecture at the University of California, Berkeley from 1952-1958 and 1962-1974. He also served on, or worked for, a variety of boards and commissions, including the San Francisco Planning and Housing Association (1945), the San Francisco Art Association (1947-1951), and the San Francisco Arts Commission (1947-1950, 1960s).

The architecture critic Allan Temko said of Born that he "was not only the grand old man of San Francisco architecture but one of the finest graphic artists of a generation that learned to draw with disciplined splendor when buildings and cities could still be seen as romance." ("In Memory," *AIA/SF*.)

*Thomas D. Church (1902-1978)*

Thomas Church was one of the two best-known landscape architects in San Francisco's history. He shares this distinction with Lawrence Halprin, who worked in Church's office at the beginning of his career.

Church was identified as the landscape architect of North Beach Place in John Bolles article for *Architect and Engineer* in 1945. From this source, it is clear that Church was part of the 1941-1942 design team. It is not known, however, whether he was still involved when the housing project was finally built during 1950-1952. Some important elements, at least, of Church's landscape design were executed. These include the location and dimensions of the parking lots, and the underpasses that connected pedestrian plazas. It is probable that the concrete planters and some of the lawn areas that were part of the finished North Beach Place had been designed by Church in the early 1940s.

Church was born in Boston, grew up in Berkeley, studied landscape architecture at the University of California in Berkeley (graduating in 1923), and got a master's degree in the field from the Harvard Graduate School of Design. After travel in Europe, he taught at Ohio State University for one year and returned to the Bay Area in 1929. He then taught for a year at the University of California, and opened his own office at 402 Jackson Street in 1932.

His practice over the next forty-five years was extensive. The great majority of his commissions were gardens for private residences in the Bay Area. These were found in San Francisco, especially in the Russian Hill neighborhood near his home; in upper-middle class suburban districts south of San Francisco; in Sonoma County; and elsewhere. In general, it can be said that Church departed from Beaux Arts landscape principles to adopt a modern aesthetic for these gardens. He used modern materials and curvilinear lines; in some ways his gardens were reminiscent of modern art. Nevertheless, he was well-informed regarding historical landscape practices, and his

gardens were influenced by traditional ideas when the preferences of the client, the architecture of the adjacent house, or the nature of the site required this. His residential gardens were illustrated in a number of magazines, especially *Sunset*; and in his two books, *Gardens are for People* (1955), and *Your Private World* (1969).

Church also acquired commissions for institutional and commercial landscapes. His best-known, perhaps, is the lawn between the Opera House and the Veterans Building on Van Ness Avenue in San Francisco (1932). He also designed landscapes for industrial plants, hospitals, and college campuses. He designed the spaces around three buildings on the Stanford University campus, was a consultant for the University of California at Berkeley from 1959-1969, and was the principle landscape architect for planning the new University of California at Santa Cruz (1961).

#### Acquisition of the Site by the Housing Authority

North Beach Place occupies all of the two city blocks bounded by Mason, Jones, Francisco, and Bay streets, and Columbus Avenue, save for the small lot that is now occupied by Tower Classics, at 2568 Jones Street (at the intersection of Jones, Columbus, and Bay). The housing project site is owned by the San Francisco Housing Authority, which was also the developer and original owner of North Beach Place.

The Housing Authority acquired these two blocks by eminent domain in 1941 and 1942. Previous to 1941 the land had been divided into dozens of lots that were occupied by a variety of residential, commercial, and industrial uses. The Housing Authority acquired nearly all of these lots during May through July, 1941. The final lot was acquired in January 1942. (Sales Ledgers, Assessor's Office.)

#### Financing and Construction of North Beach Place

At the end of World War II, the Federal Public Housing Authority allotted funds to build several San Francisco housing projects that had been delayed by the war, including \$869,000 to build North Beach Place. The war, however, had pushed up the cost of materials, and in October 1945 North Beach Place was expected to cost \$1,600,000. The housing project was put out to bid, with the expectation that the city would have to ask the federal government for more money.

When bids did come in, it was found that North Beach Place would cost \$6126 per unit to build. Under the terms of the Housing Act of 1937, however, housing projects could cost only \$5000 per living unit. Until a bill could be passed in Congress raising this limit, North Beach Place and the other planned projects could not proceed.

A new Housing Act was passed in 1949, with the result that planning could resume for all of the housing projects in San Francisco that had not yet been built. Designs were revised slightly to take into account changes that had been made in the building code since the early 1940s. The first housing project to be commenced was Ping Yuen. The second was North Beach Place.

In October 1949, the rent structure for future residents of the new housing projects was announced. The rental for a unit would be from \$13.50 to \$51.00 per month, based on a percentage of income. This percentage was to be from twenty-two percent of monthly income, for a family of two, down to seventeen percent, for a family of six or more. The maximum allowable incomes were to be from \$180 to \$249 per month. Once one became a resident, one's income could exceed that upper limit by twenty percent without triggering an eviction. With the rental income North Beach Place and the other new projects, the San Francisco Housing Authority expected that it could pay off its federal loan of \$8,250,000 in forty years.

In March and April 1950 the old buildings on the site of North Beach Place, acquired by the city by eminent domain nine years earlier, were finally demolished. K.T.K. Wrecking Company, of Hayward, was awarded the demolition contract with a low bid of \$7950. The buildings included warehouses, residential flats, and the Cable Car Restaurant, which had been a popular Italian restaurant at Bay and Taylor streets since the 1920s.

Construction of North Beach Place took over two years. The contractor who built the project was Leo Epp, Inc., of San Francisco, and the cost of construction was variously reported as being \$2,140,877, \$2,367,500, and \$2,872,919. The lowest sum was the last reported (in the November issue of *Architect and Engineer*), and is probably the most accurate.

In September 1952, the first 101 units of North Beach Place opened to tenants, although two wings were not yet completed, and landscaping remained to be done. One new tenant, Albert Conlon, was interviewed by the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Conlon was a forty year-old hotel employee. (After moving in, he became an employee at the Simmons mattress-making factory in North Beach.) He, his wife, and their four children had spent the past eighteen months living in two rooms at a hotel at a cost of seventy dollars per month. Because they had children, they had been turned away from other apartments that they had looked at. At North Beach Place, the Conlons selected a five-room apartment on the ground floor at a cost of \$32.50 per month. They were clearly very pleased at the prospect of living there. Mr. Conlon cited the play area for the children, the laundry facilities, the "cheerful colors" of the buildings, the quiet, and the low rents as attractions. "I've lived in 16 states, and I haven't seen anything to compare with these apartments here. They are wonderful," he said. ("New Housing Project Opens.")

#### Segregation and the NAACP Lawsuit

While Albert Conlon and other new residents of North Beach Place were moving in, three African-American applicants had to wait before they knew whether they would be accepted as residents.

In 1950, the San Francisco Housing Authority had reached an agreement with the Board of Supervisors regarding segregation in the city's housing projects. The original "neighborhood pattern" plan of 1942 would apply to the city's first ten housing projects;

that is, those planned before the war. Westside Court would be devoted to African-American residents, Ping Yuen would be devoted to Chinese residents, and the other eight housing projects would be devoted to white residents. (The eleventh project, Glen Craggs, was never built due to neighborhood opposition. It would have been occupied by white residents.) By contrast, all subsequent housing projects would open without racial restrictions.

The reasons given by the Housing Authority for instituting a segregation policy for the first ten housing projects was somewhat convoluted. The federal government required a “cooperation agreement” with local governments before federal funds could be dispersed to build projects. This meant, among other things, that local housing authorities had to show that they could operate a housing project adequately. In San Francisco, and almost certainly in other cities, racial segregation was chosen as a way of achieving the “harmony” in operations that was required by the federal government. The San Francisco Housing Authority also said that it was providing “separate but equal” accommodations for African-Americans by reserving Westside Court for them.

When North Beach Place opened in 1952, three African-American families applied for admittance. All qualified as far as income was concerned, and one was the second applicant in line. When the Housing Authority refused to admit them, the San Francisco branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) sued on the grounds that the Housing Authority was denying equal rights to individuals. In October 1952 Superior Court Judge Melvin Cronin ruled that the Housing Authority’s policy was unconstitutional, and in August 1953 this decision was upheld by the State District Court of Appeal. Justice Fred B. Wood wrote the decision stating that the Housing Authority’s neighborhood pattern was an “arbitrary method of exclusion, a guarantee of inequality of treatment of eligible persons.” He further noted that the Housing Authority was “exercising a state power to preserve, perpetuate, and enforce a neighborhood racial pattern.” Negroes as a group might eventually achieve equal housing rights, he said, but individuals were being unfairly treated. He noted that the Fourteenth Amendment guarantees due process of law to persons as individuals rather than as groups. The Housing Authority appealed again, and in October 1953 the State Supreme Court ruled against them again.

As a result of these rulings the NAACP said it expected housing authorities in Oakland, Pittsburg, Vallejo, Stockton, and other cities that practiced segregation to comply with the ruling.

This was an early court ruling against the practice of racial segregation in housing, but it was not the first. *Shelley v. Kramer* (1948) ended the enforcement of restrictive racial covenants in residential neighborhoods. This was a landmark ruling, but applied only to one kind of housing discrimination. Other court cases were required to end other types.

Prior to the North Beach Place case, only two other court cases had dealt with racial segregation in public housing projects. One, in Pennsylvania, had upheld the

“neighborhood pattern” policy in that state. The other, in New Jersey, ended racial segregation in public housing in that state as unconstitutional.

The San Francisco Housing Authority stated that it would appeal the State Supreme Court decision to the United States Supreme Court. Based on a search of indexes to San Francisco newspapers, it appears that this appeal did not occur, or that the U.S. Supreme Court elected not to hear the case.

During the various appeals, the Housing Authority set aside fifteen of the first 101 completed living units for African-Americans at North Beach Place, in the event it lost at the higher courts. These units were scattered around the project, instead of being contiguous. Ultimately, the Housing Authority scrapped its quota system.

At any rate, the ethnic make-up of the North Beach neighborhood was rapidly changing. It had long been an Italian, or Italian-American neighborhood. Immigrants from northern Italy had lived in North Beach in small numbers in the 1860s, and in moderate numbers during the 1880s and 1890s. At the turn of the century, large numbers of southern Italians began to emigrate to San Francisco, and most settled in North Beach. Spanish, Portuguese, Italian-Swiss, and Italian-speaking Dalmatians settled in the neighborhood, as well. By the 1930s, North Beach was largely Italian, with substantial numbers of other residents from southern Europe. After World War II, however, the more affluent Italians and other whites began to move to single-family houses in the suburbs and other parts of San Francisco. They sold their North Beach property to Chinese buyers, who were beginning to move north from Chinatown for the first time, and who regarded North Beach flats and apartments as a substantial improvement over the tenements they had been living in. By the 1960s, Chinese were a very significant proportion of the population of North Beach.

#### Residents of North Beach Place, 1953-1979

##### *Race and Ethnicity*

The percentage by race of North Beach Place residents during the first twenty years the project existed is not known with any precision. Much can be discerned, however, from the listing of residents’ names in city directories. Based on their last names, the ethnic make-up of North Beach Place can be partly determined:

1953

Italian:	14%
French, Spanish, and Portuguese:	19%
Chinese:	13%

1962

Italian:	6%
French, Spanish, and Portuguese:	11%
Chinese:	8%

1972

Italian:	3%
French, Spanish, and Portuguese:	5%
Chinese:	33%

While the practice of assigning ethnicity by last names is not reliable to a high degree of accuracy, it is clear from this table that the number of people of Italian, French, Spanish, and Portuguese descent was declining, and the number of Chinese was increasing, during these years.

In 1979, a Chinatown community center compiled a census for North Beach Place and found its tenants to be composed of the following races:

Asian:	45%
White:	26%
African-American:	22%
Other:	7%

Because the survey methods were different, it is difficult to compare these figures with those for 1972, above.

### *Occupational Status*

Much can be determined about the occupations held by North Beach Place residents from the 1950s into the 1970s from their listings in city directories. The breakdown follows:

1953

residents with blue collar jobs:	36%
residents with low white collar jobs:	19%
residents with military jobs	7%
unemployed residents	36%
widows without jobs	2%

total percentage of employed residents: 62%  
total percentage of unemployed residents: 38%

The blue collar workers in 1953 included the following job descriptions: bartender, stevedore, fireman, deliveryman, craneman, porter, crater, laborer, janitor, waiter, cab

driver, cook, fisherman, machine operator, carpenter. The white collar positions included stenographer, teacher, clerk, operator, salesman, bookkeeper, typist, and draftsman.

1962

residents with blue collar jobs:	26%
residents with low white collar jobs:	8%
residents with high white collar jobs:	1%
residents who owned businesses	2%
residents with military jobs	7%
unemployed residents	50%
widows without jobs	5%

total percentage of employed residents: 44%

total percentage of unemployed residents: 55%

Blue collar positions in 1962 included business machine operator, busman, laundry worker, hospital worker, marble polisher, pantryman, kitchen helper, news vendor, machine operator, factory worker, maid, cook, guard, parking lot attendant, telephone operator, printer, painter, packer, yardman, barber, maintenance man, warehouseman, and cannery worker. White collar workers included the following positions: librarian, nurse, stenographer, teacher, office worker, typist, musician, and a supervisor for the public schools. Business owners included owners of a barber shop, a service station, a laundry, and a café.

1972

residents with blue collar jobs:	14%
residents with low white collar jobs:	3%
unemployed residents	61%
widows without jobs	4%
retired residents	17%
students	1%

total percentage of employed residents: 17%

total percentage of unemployed residents: 83%

Blue collar positions in 1972 included mechanic, bus boy, seamstress, cutter, press feeder, and goldsmith. White collar workers included a clerk and an aide.

By 1972, then, the number of employed residents at North Beach Place had plummeted, and the number of unemployed residents had soared, relative to the time the project opened. What the city directories do not explain is why this trend was so pronounced.

Crime and Drug Problems, Hope Halikias, and Tel-Hi, 1970s-1980s

Crime at North Beach Place increased greatly in the 1970s, compared to earlier decades. These problems were described in a 1979 *San Francisco Chronicle* newspaper article written by Frances D'Emilio. Burglaries, robberies, auto theft, and shoplifting at nearby Fisherman's Wharf had become somewhat regular occurrences by that time. Most of the crimes, according to the article, were committed by about two dozen teenagers, some of whom lived in the housing project, and some of whom did not. Many of the victims were elderly residents who lived in one-bedroom apartments in the buildings facing Bay Street. Some of these elderly residents worked in restaurants and for other businesses at Fisherman's Wharf. The teenagers knew when they would return to their apartments at night, after work, and rob them then. Many apartments at North Beach Place were broken into, and break-ins of automobiles that were parked by tourists next to the project were also common.

The *Chronicle* article compared crime statistics for the area around North Beach Place for six-month periods in 1977 and 1978. In those two years, burglaries dropped from forty-four to nine, and grand theft from autos fell from ninety to fifty-nine. Robberies, however, increased from eleven to thirty-six, and rapes from zero to two.

Edward Rodriguez, a police officer from Central Station whose beat had included the Fisherman's Wharf area since 1973, observed that crime was mild when he began, but that the severity of offenses increased as the kids committing these crimes had gotten older.

The plan of North Beach Place made apprehension of culprits very difficult. Stairwells made good hiding places, and it was easy for a robber or burglar to run along the balconies from one building to another. Uniformed police made arrests only by luck. Only plainclothes cops had any real hope of making arrests. Police Chief Charles Gain developed an undercover program in the summer of 1978, when teenagers committed a rash of crimes against Fisherman's Wharf tourists. Such programs, however, were temporary, and did little to protect residents of the housing project.

A woman named Hope Halikias emerged as a leader in the struggle to make North Beach Place safer and more livable. She was born in 1924 in the Hell's Kitchen neighborhood of New York City. After eight marriages, she wound up in San Francisco on welfare and in need of a place to live. She moved into North Beach Place in 1969 and remained jobless for the next five years. In 1974, she found a job with the Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Center, organizing senior citizens programs. She never went back on welfare after that. At about the same time, she became the president of the North Beach Place tenants association. Through her organizing efforts, about fifty tenants regularly attended meetings in 1979.

Halikias herself was the victim of an attempted break-in. After the incident, she spent money planned for a vacation on a set of bars to go over her windows. "That's when I started investing in my own prison," she told *Chronicle* reporter D'Emilio in 1979. From

a description in a 1984 *San Francisco Examiner* article by Amy Linn, however, it sounds like she kept her apartment in excellent condition. She kept geraniums outside her window; inside, “she has tiled, wallpapered, painted, scrubbed, torn out and put in until her place felt like home.”

Under Halikias’s leadership, the tenants’ association persuaded the Housing Authority to install 600 window grilles at a cost of \$50,000, and to install high-intensity lights in stairwells and other places. A meeting room and a laundry room were provided to the tenants in Building 11. Local merchants were persuaded to supply paint in order to repaint the project. Inspired by the successful example of the Ping Yuen tenants, the tenants’ association threatened a rent strike in 1979, unless the Housing Authority made security improvements and provided guards. This, the Housing Authority was hesitant to agree to, fearing that tenants at other housing projects would make the same demands, which the Authority could not afford.

According to the 1984 *Examiner* article by Amy Linn, the North Beach Place tenants’ association successfully sued the Authority for neglecting maintenance work at the project, and attained a \$500,000 federal grant for increased security and job development for teenagers.

Hope Halikias applied a lot of personal attention to improving North Beach Place. She attended numerous meetings, organized tenants, and always ran for president of the association. Her friend Ora Anderson, another North Beach Place tenant, told reporter Amy Linn in 1995, “Hope was so involved.... She had a cause over there – she was going to straighten that place out.... She would be going out with her flashlight in the middle of the night to fix things.”

Halikias and the other tenants had a lot of help from a local non-profit organization, the Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Center. This was the group that employed Halikias to run a senior center. Tel-Hi, as it was generally called, has always had other programs as well. It particularly focuses on providing education and employment opportunities for youth in North Beach.

The Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Center was founded in 1890 as a privately-run organization. Its mission was to serve the poor, and poorly-educated, residents of the neighborhood, especially the Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish who lived on the upper slopes of Telegraph Hill. Over the years the ethnic and geographic focus of its activities has changed. After the earthquake and fire of 1906 the organization moved to Stockton Street, into a new building designed by Bernard Maybeck, to serve immigrants in North Beach. In more recent decades Tel-Hi has served Asian and African-American families in North Beach. When North Beach Place opened in 1952, its residents became part of the population that Tel-Hi served. In about 1957 Tel-Hi’s by-laws were changed, requiring it to name some of the residents of North Beach Place to its board of directors. As conditions at North Beach Place deteriorated in the 1970s and 1980s, the project became one of Tel-Hi’s primary concerns.

Since the early 1980s, Tel-Hi's executive director has been Denise McCarthy. She states that at the time of her arrival, North Beach Place was roughly sixty to sixty-five percent African American, with the next largest group being Chinese. The rest were whites, southeast Asians, and people from India. The families at North Beach Place were largely stable, and had lived there for many years. The tenants' organization was composed of people from different racial and ethnic groups, and there was a considerable degree of association between these groups. In general, North Beach Place was composed of close-knit communities, and there was a fairly strong sense of community within the project as a whole. (McCarthy, 2002.) To a large degree, it seems that North Beach Place was able to withstand the crime wave of the late 1970s.

The crack cocaine epidemic of the mid-1980s, however, had a tremendous negative impact on North Beach Place. This epidemic appears to have begun in the latter half of 1984, and was especially pronounced in San Francisco's housing projects. In spite of the cohesive spirit of the residents, the installation of window grilles and lights by the Housing Authority, and continued involvement by Halikias, the tenants' association, and Tel-Hi, conditions at North Beach Place became far worse than they had been during the late 1970s. Denise McCarthy relates that poorer and less educated families succumbed to the epidemic, and the crime rate increased dramatically. Gunfire, stabbings, and fights, once rare occurrences, became commonplace. Children robbed their grandmothers. Families were devastated. The Tel-Hi office a few blocks from the project was robbed many times, and had to be redesigned so that everything could be locked up. During the holidays both North Beach Place and the Tel-Hi office had to prepare to withstand the escalation of crime at those times. While the crime level was modest compared to that at Potrero Hill and Hunter's Point projects, it was far greater than it had been before the crack cocaine epidemic.

In the late-1980s North Beach Place experienced the kind of drive-by shootings that were associated with the drug trade at this time. This phenomenon became a common occurrence in, or near, San Francisco housing projects. In October 1988 shots were fired into a North Beach Place parking lot while tourists waited for a cable car. The following month, gunmen again fired several shots into a parking lot, wounding two men who refused to cooperate with police.

A January 1989 *San Francisco Examiner* article by John D. O'Connor identified the Bay Street Mob, centered at Bay and Taylor streets, as one of ten crack cocaine gangs in the city at that time. Most, though not all, of these gangs were associated with housing projects. Gang members typically chose older, American-made cars, which were better able to withstand return gunfire, to cruise in and to perform drive-by shootings from, in order to protect their turf and intimidate rivals from selling drugs on the street. Apparently the Bay Street Mob was one of the smaller gangs in the city.

The more stable families at North Beach Place, that is, those not involved in drugs, chose to leave the housing project. Many of the African-American residents went to Oakland, and moved into Section 8 housing or purchased homes. The departure of the most stable

residents left a social void at the housing project. A disproportionate percentage of those who stayed were severely troubled.

Most of the empty units were filled by Asian families who, due to poverty, had little choice but to move to North Beach Place. In addition to Asian families, young single mothers, mostly African-American, were also offered units at North Beach Place. This group had not been associated with North Beach Place previously.

The exodus of stable African-American families from North Beach Place, and the new arrivals that took their places, resulted in a change in demographics at the housing project. After the exodus North Beach Place became 65% Asian and 25% to 30% African-American, a reversal of the percentages several years earlier.

Unemployment was extremely high at North Beach Place at this time. There were single mothers on welfare, people with chronic health problems who couldn't work, and people who simply didn't work.

Throughout this period the key leadership in the project's tenant association remained constant. The leaders of the tenants association maintained close ties to Tel-Hi, and the latter group had a close relationship with the Fisherman's Wharf Merchants' Association, Telegraph Hill Neighbors, and the police. Tel-Hi approached the Hyatt Hotel and wharf merchants to set up an employment program, whereby the Hyatt and merchants hired youth from the housing project. Many merchants offered summer jobs to project youth. Sometimes these jobs worked out, and sometimes they didn't. Because of the trust that Tel-Hi forged with the merchants, when there was trouble, the merchants called Tel-Hi, and not the police; and Tel-Hi then called the police if it was necessary to do so. Tel-Hi was a constant, and energetic, advocate for North Beach Place tenants. At the high point, Tel-Hi found jobs for some dozens of the tenants. The organization also maintained contact with many North Beach Place residents on a daily basis. Through the close ties between Tel-Hi, the North Beach Place tenants association, and the Fishermen's Wharf Merchants' Association, the project was able to survive the 1980s. When a proposal was floated to demolish the housing project and replace it with commercial development, the merchants supported retention of the project, and this proposal was defeated.

#### Moving Out of North Beach Place

The original intent of public housing was that residency would be temporary, until residents could recover from temporary problems, build job skills, move out, and buy a house. In the earliest projects, during the 1940s and into the 1950s, this is how things often worked. During the 1950s and later, however, many residents of public housing projects became permanent residents.

Denise McCarthy explains that, to some extent, the dynamic of building job skills and moving out held true for the Asian families at North Beach Place after the 1950s, and into recent times. There is a great deal of mutual support within the Asian community, and many Asian residents of projects can move out eventually, perhaps buying a house in the

Sunset district. This kind of support, or infrastructure, hasn't been as present in the African-American community. African-Americans, therefore, have been more likely to be permanent, or very long-term residents, of North Beach Place and other housing projects.

Hope Halikias delayed moving away from North Beach Place until the early 1990s; when she did so, it was at the urging of friends. In 1984 she had told *Examiner* reporter Amy Linn, "Everything is a fight.... I'm getting burned out; I really am.... I've always dreamed of getting out.... Having a place with a garden somewhere where I can go in and dig. Now I'm afraid maybe I'll die here." In 1995, after she moved, she told the same reporter, "There are good people back there.... I wanted to keep living in the projects so bad.... I'd become accustomed to it after so many years."

Her friend Ora Anderson moved away in 1991. She told Amy Linn that she mainly remembered the noise, the anxiety, and the fear that her son would become involved in a gang. "All in all," she said, "it's really a terrible place." She and Halikias's partner of twenty years convinced Halikias to look for a new place to live.

Halikias found a low-income condominium on King Street, at the Embarcadero. While there was no place to garden, it had a view of the waterfront. She told reporter Linn, "The serenity and peace and quiet here – it's heaven.... Can you believe how peaceful it is?"

#### Demolition and Replacement of North Beach Place

In 1992, Congress created a new federal program, HOPE VI (Homeownership and Opportunity for People Everywhere) aimed at the revitalization of housing projects. Under this program, troubled or poorly-designed housing projects would be replaced by new developments.

The San Francisco Housing Authority has been awarded funds for five HOPE VI projects since 1993. The first housing project in San Francisco to be replaced under the program was Hayes Valley Housing, a project that had been built in 1961. Subsequent HOPE VI projects in San Francisco were Bernal Dwellings, Yerba Buena Plaza East, and North Beach Place. Valencia Gardens is to be the fifth project replaced under HOPE VI.

In these projects, the city has decided to retain the same number of public housing living units as had been in the old projects, and to add a substantial number of subsidized living units. Under this plan, the density would be increased, the design would be improved, and a mix of people, with differing incomes, would live together in the same development.

\$20 million in federal funds was designated for the replacement of North Beach Place, and was granted to the city in 1997. The balance of the construction costs (the great majority) is being supplied by the city and the private sector. Upon completion, the new

North Beach Place will contain 229 units of public housing, an additional 112 units of subsidized housing, and retail shops facing Bay Street.

A controversy arose prior to demolition of the project. Fears among the tenants regarding relocation, coupled with mistrust of San Francisco's Housing Authority, resulted in a signed agreement between the tenants and the authority. Under this agreement, the east half of North Beach Place would be demolished and rebuilt first, to be followed by the west half. This staging would ease relocation stresses in a city with a tight housing market.

Delays in construction resulted in a substantial inflation of the construction cost of North Beach Place. Accordingly, the city preferred to realize the savings that would come with demolishing and rebuilding the entire project at once, including economies of scale available through special financing programs (such as the Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit program). Extensive negotiations were required before tenants in the west block would agree to leave and find new places to live.

Demolition began on the east block in December 2001, and demolition of the west block was completed in January 2003. At this writing (March 2003) construction on the new North Beach Place is underway. The developer is a partnership of three companies: BRIDGE Housing Corporation, the John Stewart Company, and Em Johnson Interest.

#### **IV. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF NORTH BEACH PLACE**

From the original plans of 1941-1942, to the construction of 1950-1952, and until the demolition in 2001-2003, the essential character of North Beach Place remained unchanged. Some redesign and alterations did occur over the years, however. The original conception, the project as it was built, and the various alterations to the property are described below.

##### Original plans and construction

Although the original plans of 1941-1942 have not been found, an illustrated article by John S. Bolles, which appeared in *Architect and Engineer* in 1945, reveals much regarding the appearance of North Beach Place as it was first planned. Minor revisions were made to the plans in 1949 or 1950, and the project was built during 1950-1952. As-built drawings reveal that the project changed very little between its original design and its completion. Newspaper articles from the 1940s and 1950s confirm some of the details given in the above sources.

North Beach Place consisted of thirteen rectangular buildings distributed over two city blocks. All buildings were constructed of reinforced concrete and were three to four stories in height. In the plans, each building was referred to by a building number. In later years the buildings were known by addresses. To avoid confusion when referring to buildings in this text, the building numbers and their addresses are listed below:

The eastern block, bounded by Francisco/Bay/Mason/Taylor:

Building 1: 415 Bay  
Building 2: 445 Bay  
Building 3: 475 Bay  
Building 6: 401 Bay/500 Francisco  
Building 7: 431 Bay/530 Francisco  
Building 8: 461 Bay/560 Francisco  
Building 9: 491 Bay/590 Francisco

The western block, bounded by Francisco/Bay/Taylor/Columbus/Jones:

Building 4: 515 Bay  
Building 5: 545 Bay  
Building 10: 501 Bay/600 Francisco  
Building 11: 531 Bay/650 Francisco  
Building 12: 561 Bay/1120 Columbus Avenue  
Building 13: 575 Bay

The buildings were arranged in linked series of U configurations around parking lots and landscaped courtyards. Buildings 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 13 were the smaller buildings. They fronted directly on Bay Street and were arranged on an east-west axis. Buildings 6 through 11 were much longer. They stretched from Francisco Street almost to Bay Street, and were arranged on a north-south axis. Building 12 was also arranged on a north-south axis and stretched from Columbus Avenue almost to Bay.

The east-west buildings nearly touched corners with the north-south buildings, a gap of about ten feet separating them from each other. Nevertheless, the east-west buildings were physically connected with the north-south buildings by concrete balconies that ran along the level of the upper floors. The balconies on the east-west oriented buildings (buildings 1 through 5, and 13) ran continuously along the Bay Street frontage of the project, and wrapped around corners to continue along the sides of the long, north-south buildings. Near Francisco Street the balconies wrapped around slight projections in the building footprints. Where the balconies wrapped around corners they formed distinct curves. These long balconies with curved ends gave North Beach Place its Streamlined Moderne and International style appearance.

Buildings facing city streets were set back from those streets a distance of two to seven feet, with rows of trees or concrete planter boxes filling the area between the sidewalks and the buildings.

In the original plans of the 1940s, twelve of the buildings were to be three stories in height, and the other, Building 13, would be four stories in height. As actually constructed, two buildings, numbers 11 and 13, contained four stories. Building 12 was

staggered in height due to the slope of the land. While plans show it as having four stories, it was only three stories high at any given point in the elevation.

With the change in plans, the number of living units was slightly increased, from 226 (as planned in 1941-1942) to 229 (as constructed). The number of bedrooms per unit was as follows:

	<i>Original plans</i>	<i>As constructed</i>
1 bedroom:	60	61
2 bedrooms:	98	99
3 bedrooms:	59	60
4 bedrooms:	9	9

The concrete surface of each building was left unfinished, and exhibited horizontal lines left by the forms used when the concrete was poured.

Ornament was limited to circular cut outs, or portholes, in the stairwell walls facing Bay Street. On the top story of each building, flat, rectangular slabs were cantilevered over each doorway, establishing a staccato pattern that contrasted with the continuous line of the balconies. Garbage chutes, rounded near Bay Street and rectangular in the interior of the complex, provided an occasional vertical element.

Two drawings in the Bolles article of 1945 show garbage chutes rising alongside, and above, balconies with curved ends. One of the drawings is captioned “A composition in vertical and horizontal elements.” This interplay of horizontal and vertical elements, with the former predominating, was the only architectural effect referred to in the article.

The courtyards between the buildings became opportunities for parking, landscaping, and pedestrian circulation. A “Garden Level Plan” shown in the 1945 article by John Bolles illustrates how these courtyards were intended to be used. Three of the courtyards, between buildings 6 and 7, between buildings 8 and 9, and between buildings 10 and 11, were mainly devoted to parking. Trees or shrubs could be found around the perimeter of each parking area. To the north of each parking area was a small, paved pedestrian plaza with some lawn. Between buildings 7 and 8 there was landscaping of an uncertain nature – either lawns or a playground. The courtyard between buildings 11 and 12 was a paved pedestrian court with some lawn space. In all of these courtyards the lawns (variously rectangular and curvilinear) were small, while trees or shrubs were numerous. Only one courtyard, that west of Building 12, was devoted almost entirely to lawn. Trees also encircled the housing project, in the sidewalk area along Francisco, Bay, Mason, Taylor, and Jones streets, and Columbus Avenue.

The courtyards also served as points of entrance to the buildings 6 through 12. Entrances to the upper story apartments were via balconies that were accessed by staircases that originated at the north and south ends of these courtyards. Entrances to the first story floor apartments were either at ground level, and opened directly onto the courtyards; or

were accessed by individual staircases of several steps. These staircases had privacy screen walls of reinforced concrete.

The pedestrian areas of these courtyards appear to have been paved with exposed aggregate concrete panels. Some of the panels were approximately four feet by eight feet, and others were much larger. Thin wooden dividers were laid between the joints of these panels.

Within each block, pedestrian circulation was facilitated by an underpass through buildings 7, 8, and 11. In each of these buildings, the northern portion of the ground level was left open, allowing people to pass from one courtyard to another. In these buildings, the upper stories were supported by square concrete posts. One of these underpasses is illustrated in the 1945 article and is shown to be paved. In the as-built plans, each underpass is shown to be sixty feet in length.

According to the 1945 article, facilities at North Beach Place included a “large” social room, an “experimental kitchen,” and two craft rooms. The as-built plans show the common rooms to include a manager’s office, an “office work space,” a waiting room, a repair shop, and three storage rooms, all clustered at the south end of Building 11.

Both the article and the as-built plans show that laundry facilities were on the roofs of the buildings. These consisted of laundry rooms and drying yards located on buildings 1, 3, 4, and 5, and at the north ends of buildings 6, 9, 10, and 12. The roofs were connected by concrete walkways.

### Alterations

For a complex of this size, relatively few alterations had been made to North Beach Place prior to its demolition in 2002. The alterations that did occur included the following:

The underpass in the first story at the north end of Building 11 no longer existed at the time of demolition. If this building was built with an underpass, as is shown in the as-built plans, it was altered at an unknown date, and the underpass area became an enclosed structure. In 2001 this space was occupied by the housing project’s Community Room, which included a meeting room, a kitchen, two bathrooms, and closets.

At an unknown date, a former repair shop in Building 11 was remodeled to become the laundry room for North Beach Place. This room was equipped with washers and dryers.

Laundry rooms and drying yards on the roofs of buildings were dismantled or no longer used by 2001. Solar heating panels had been installed on most roofs by that date.

In 1979, grilles of concentric diamond patterns were installed over windows in the first story and along balconies. They were installed after a highly publicized series of break-ins and other criminal activities in 1979. (D’Emilio, 1979.)

Thomas Church's original landscaping plan remained somewhat intact, but did suffer some alterations between 1952 and 2001. The areas devoted to parking and playgrounds remained the same, or nearly so. The configuration of paved pedestrian areas and lawns changed to a certain degree. Many trees were removed, while other trees had grown to large dimensions. The filling in of the underpass in Building 11 altered the flow of pedestrian activity. A concrete planter at the north end of the courtyard between buildings 6 and 7 had been filled in with concrete. Other planters in the complex were still filled with earth, but lacked plantings due to long lack of maintenance. A small modular office building was placed in the courtyard between buildings 11 and 12. The courtyard that filled the angle between Building 12, Building 13, and Columbus Avenue was transformed into a community garden.

Four murals were painted on the exterior of buildings in the 1970s-1990s. The first two murals to be painted, in 1975, were on the south wall and stairwell of Building 12. Painted by artists Carol Nast, Percy Chester, and Pamela Remkiewicz, these murals were New Age in style. On the south wall of Building 10 was an underwater ocean scene painted by Kym Sites, of Politec Paints group, in 1981. The last mural to be painted, by Dennis Taniguchi, Jason Leong, and five assistants in 1993, was on the south wall of Building 9. It was a cartoon-style mural of laughing and smiling musicians and dancers of many nationalities in a cable car. It was sponsored by Japantown Art and Media and the Chinatown Youth Center, and was funded by the Neighborhood Beautification and Graffiti Clean-up Fund.

The original coloring of North Beach Place is unknown. The 1945 article by John Bolles says simply that the exterior walls would be "left exposed," while a 1952 article on the opening of North Beach Place implies the buildings were painted. In the 1980s the buildings were painted salmon on the lower floors and yellow-brown above.

Most living units had been unaltered in 2001, save for exterior wooden hollow-core doors, new flooring of linoleum tiles, and some new bathroom fixtures. However, at least one living unit, number 103 in Building 6, had been altered for handicapped access. The hallway in this unit was widened for a wheelchair, the shower was wheelchair-accessible, the closets had variable-height racks, and the unit had been generally remodeled with new sheetrock walls, new door moldings, vinyl baseboards, a new kitchen sink, and new cabinets. Wheelchair ramps leading to a few other first story units indicated that these units had also been so altered.

### Architectural Character and Features Just Prior to Demolition

#### *Architectural character*

Architecturally, the style of North Beach Place was a blend of Streamlined Moderne and International styles. The long, continuous balconies were strongly horizontal, and contributed to both style designations. The rounded corners of the balconies contributed to the Streamlined Moderne feeling. Cantilevered rectangular slabs over each top story doorway functioned as awnings and established a staccato pattern that contrasted with the

continuous curvilinear balconies. Garbage chutes rising above the roofline provided vertical punctuation. Circular cutouts in the stairwells were the only ornament.

The window grilles of concentric diamond patterns, placed in 1979, were somewhat Art Deco in style, and harmonized with the Streamlined Moderne style of the housing project.

The buildings were also intended by the architects to form a complex of cubist masses whose severity was relieved by the curving balconies. This intention was clearer, and perhaps more aesthetically pleasing, in the heavily shadowed drawings that were used to illustrate John Bolles's article in *Architect and Engineer*, than it was in the constructed buildings.

#### *Condition of fabric*

Architecturally, the buildings were in excellent condition at the time of demolition. The grounds, however, had deteriorated. The original landscaping had not been maintained in many years, many trees had been removed and not been replaced, and planters were either filled in or were devoid of vegetation.

#### Description of Exterior

##### *Overall dimensions*

North Beach Place occupied two square city blocks. The eastern block measures 412'-6" along its east-west axis by 275' along its north-south axis. The west block is the same size, minus a corner that is truncated by the diagonal of Columbus Avenue, and a lot at 2568 Jones, measuring seventy feet by ninety-nine feet, that is now occupied by Tower Classics.

##### *Foundations*

When North Beach Place was designed in 1941-1942, the structural engineer, August V. Saph, consulted with geologists and soils engineers, Dames and Moore, regarding the most appropriate foundation to use on this landfill site. The decision was made to sink concrete piles into the ground as a foundation.

##### *Walls and structural system*

North Beach Place employed reinforced concrete exterior bearing walls, a reinforced concrete post-and-girder interior system, and reinforced concrete flat slab floors and roof.

Exterior concrete wall surfaces were finished with paint. The horizontal boards of the formwork provided some surface texture.

*Balconies, stairwells, stoops, and garbage chutes*

Balconies ran across the width of the upper floors of the Bay Street side of buildings 1 through 5, and most of the width of Building 13. In buildings 6 through 12, balconies ran along the upper stories of one of the long sides of each building. In each block, all buildings were connected to each other by balconies, which wrapped around corners to connect with each other. Near Francisco Street, the balconies on the north-south buildings wrapped around slight projections in the building footprints. In all buildings, where the balconies wrapped around corners they formed distinct curves.

Stairwells could be found at the junctions of east-west oriented buildings and north-south oriented buildings; and near the south ends of the north-south oriented buildings. Built entirely of concrete, these stairwells were rectangular in form, with flat walls. At each floor, the stairwells emptied onto balconies, which provided access to apartment entries.

Separate stoops could be found for each first story entrance in buildings 1 through 5 and 13. These stoops were on the Bay Street side of each building. Each stoop consisted of several concrete steps, small concrete landings, and low concrete privacy walls that screened each entry from the courtyard.

In buildings 1 through 5 and 13, basement access was via stairwells on the north side (Bay Street side) of each building. A low, concrete wall protected pedestrians from falling into the stairwells. Non-original wire cages blocked casual access to the basements.

Balconies provided access to garbage chutes. Chutes were rounded along Bay Street and were rectangular along the north-south buildings. The latter rose to a height slightly higher than the roofs of these buildings.

*Openings – Doorways and doors*

Doorways were simple, rectangular punched voids in the concrete walls, without moldings or casings. All exterior doors were replacement hollow core wooden doors. Many doors had protective metal grilles that did not match those over the windows, and which were probably installed later than the window grilles.

*Openings – Windows*

Nearly all windows were original, with wood frames and sash. Those to bedrooms were paired double-hung windows; those to living rooms were tripartite double-hung windows; those to kitchens had two sliding lights that flanked, and could slide over, two central fixed lights; and those to bathrooms were two-light hoppers. Some of the windows in Buildings 7 and 11 were groups of four double-hung windows.

### *Roof*

Roofs were flat, with parapets about three feet in height. Solar heating panels had replaced laundry-drying yards on some buildings.

### Description of Interiors

#### *Floor plans – Basement*

Most buildings, but not all, had basements containing a boiler room, a transformer room, a storage room, and a small hallway. Typically, the space devoted to these uses was about thirty feet square. All floor, wall, and ceiling surfaces in the basement were concrete. Please see outline formats for individual buildings for more details.

#### *Floor plans – Apartments*

North Beach Place contained living units of one, two, three, and four bedrooms. All but one of the one-bedroom units were located in buildings 1 through 5; the two and three-bedroom units were divided among buildings 6 through 13; and the four-bedroom units were divided among buildings 7, 8, and 11. Every living unit extended the full depth of the building it was in, so that light poured into each unit from two sides.

Building 11 had the most complex plan, in that it contained a one-bedroom unit; units of two, three, and four bedrooms; plus the common areas (office, meeting room, laundry room). In the mid-1990s one of the living units was converted into an office for providing social services.

All living units at North Beach Place had, in addition to one or more bedrooms, a living room, a kitchen with dining area, a bathroom, and a small linen closet. Most units also had storage rooms. Each bedroom had its own closet. Bathrooms contained a bathtub, a sink, and a toilet. Kitchens contained a refrigerator, a range, a combination sink and tray for dishwashing, a counter, and shelves. All units of two or more bedrooms contained a hall. In the two-bedroom units, the kitchen and living room were combined as one large room, whereas in other units they were separate rooms. The sole entrance to each unit was from the balcony or front stoop into the kitchen, except in the two-bedroom units, where the entrance was into the living room. Linen and coat closets were usually located adjacent to the bathroom.

The size and plan of units varied slightly according to which buildings they were in, the floors they were on, and their position in the middle or at the end of a floor. In general, units occupied the following areas:

One-bedroom units measured about twenty feet by twenty-four feet.

Two-bedroom units measured about twenty-three feet by thirty feet.

Three-bedroom units measured about twenty-seven feet by thirty feet.

Four-bedroom units measured about thirty-two feet by thirty-five feet, minus a notch of about six feet by twelve feet. These units were located at the south ends of buildings 7, 8, and 11, where balconies wrapped around the indentions in these units.

#### *Flooring*

At the time of demolition, some floors had original surfaces of nine-inch square linoleum tiles laid over concrete. Floors in other living units were surfaced with twelve-inch square vinyl tiles laid over the original linoleum.

#### *Wall and ceiling finish*

Walls in all living units were made of gypsum-plaster board. Ceilings were concrete.

#### *Openings and trim*

In the units viewed for this report, all door and window openings had very shallow moldings around their perimeters. Doors to the outside balconies and stoops were replacement hollow-core doors. Many doors inside the units were original wood panel doors. There was a doorway with moldings, but no door, between the kitchen and living room in each unit. As described above, windows were either double-hung, sliders, or hoppers, all made with wood sash.

Baseboards were wood, and were plain, lacking profiled molding.

#### *Bedroom closets*

All bedrooms had open closets. The walls, dowels, and shelves of these closets were made of wood.

#### *Lights in living units*

In the units inspected, lights were naked bulbs in ceiling sockets. Electrical conduits were mounted on some ceilings and wall surfaces.

#### *Heating*

Steam radiators could be found in the living room and in each bedroom.

#### *Kitchen fixtures*

In the units inspected, each original sink and counter fixture was made of iron, had an open base, and was supported by metal pipes. Counters were made of wood, with two

drawers beneath and open shelves above. The countertops were particle board surfaced with Formica.

#### *Bathroom fixtures*

In the units inspected, bathtubs and sinks were original, while the toilets, mirrored cabinets, and towel racks were not.

#### Mechanical systems – boilers and transformers

The basement of Building 2 was surveyed for heating and electrical systems. In the boiler room was an original boiler made by the Pacific Steel Boiler Corporation, of Waukegan, Illinois and Bristol, Pennsylvania; and a water tank on pipe mounts. In the transformer room was a Federal Pacific transformer, which may or may not have been original; and an original eight-inch diameter wall-mounted oil-based fuse made by the G&W Electric Specialty Company, of Chicago. In the storage room were two wall-mounted electrical distribution panels.

#### Site

##### *General setting and orientation*

North Beach Place occupied two adjacent blocks at the extreme north end of the North Beach neighborhood in San Francisco. To the south and southeast are a collection of buildings that are a mix of residential and commercial in character, the former predominating. The residential buildings are mostly wood framed flats two or three stories in height. These were built for an Italian blue-collar population in the years immediately after the earthquake and fire of 1906. Commercial buildings of various dates line Columbus Avenue. To the west the ground rises to become Russian Hill. Houses and flats from the 1930s and 1940s surround Bret Harte Terrace (just west of Jones), while to the south of these is the San Francisco Art Institute. North of Bay Street are commercial buildings associated with the Fisherman's Wharf district. Many of the buildings in this district date from after World War II.

The two blocks of North Beach Place are bisected by a cable car line, which runs along Taylor Street and terminates at Bay Street. The cable car line has been designated a National Historic Landmark.

##### *Historic landscape*

The buildings at North Beach Place were arranged so that courtyards were formed between the buildings. Two of the six courtyards were devoted mainly to parking, with small paved and planted areas for pedestrians north of the parking lots; half of another courtyard was devoted to parking, and half to pedestrian circulation; one courtyard was used as a playground; one was paved and planted as open space for pedestrians; and the sixth appears originally to have been an undeveloped lawn. Underpasses in buildings 7,

8, and 11 facilitated pedestrian movement between courtyards. Rows of trees or narrow strips of vegetation surrounded the three parking lots.

To a certain degree this landscaping plan by Thomas Church remained intact through 2001. The courtyards between buildings 6 and 7, between buildings 8 and 9, and between buildings 10 and 11 remained devoted to parking. Some of the original trees surrounding these parking lots survived, but many had been lost and were not replaced, so that the original pattern of plantings was not easily discernable.

The courtyard between buildings 7 and 8 remained a playground. A basketball court could be found here in 2001.

The pedestrian areas to the north of the parking lots were paved, and were raised relative to the parking lots. Raised beds with a circular concrete curb in these areas were a foot in height and several feet in diameter. They remained in place, but were devoid of vegetation, and one was filled with concrete.

The underpasses in buildings 7 and 8 remained as originally designed. That in Building 11, however, had been filled in, and the space occupied by a Community Room.

The courtyard west of Building 12 and south of Building 13 became a community garden.

Narrow strips of land between the buildings and the streets – for instance, along Bay, Francisco, Mason, and Taylor streets – were filled by rows of trees or by concrete planters. The planters and some of the trees remained in 2001, though they clearly had not been maintained for many years.

## **V. SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

### Original Architectural Drawings

The original plans of 1941-1942 have not been found. Perspective drawings and site plans from that period, however, were published with an article entitled “North Beach Place Housing Project,” by John S. Bolles, in *Architect and Engineer* in July 1945.

As-built drawings dated July 1953 were supplied by the San Francisco Housing Authority. These drawings were revisions of plans dated August 1950.

### Early Views

No early photographic views of North Beach Place have been found.

## Interviews

The author of this report interviewed Denise McCarthy, Executive Director of the Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Center, in June 2002. Ms. McCarthy had been associated with the Center for about twenty years, and has had close contact with residents of North Beach Place during that period.

The author interviewed Susan Cerny in March 2003. Ms Cerny has probably gathered more information on Henry Gutterson, one of the architects of North Beach Place, than anyone else.

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#### *Ethnic and occupational analysis*

The reverse directories at the ends of the 1953, 1962, and 1972 San Francisco city directories listed the names of nearly all residents of North Beach Place. As the housing project had not fully opened when the 1953 directory was canvassed, only 112 names of residents were found in that year. In 1962 and 1972, 217 and 212 names were found, respectively. All of these names were then looked up in the front section of the directories, which listed occupations (if any) of the residents.

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#### *Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated*

San Francisco city directories for the years 1953-1982 could reveal how long residents of North Beach Place lived at that housing project. A random sample of names can be obtained from the reverse index at the rear of the directory. These names could be looked up in the front of directories and the dates of residency could thus be established. It might be useful to compare how long early residents of North Beach Place lived in the housing project, compared to how long residents from later in the building's history lived there.

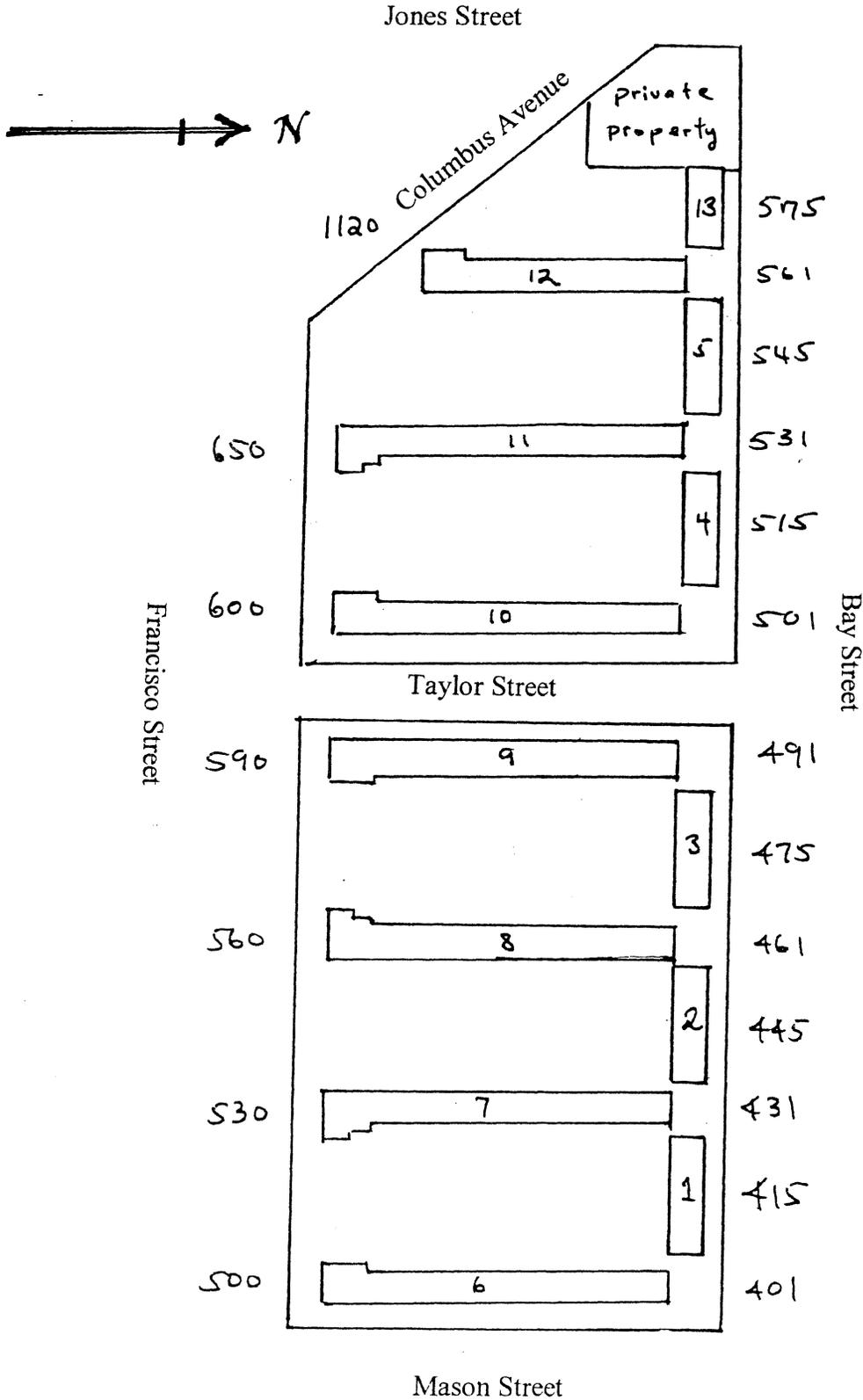
No residents of North Beach Place were interviewed for this report. Interviews with long-time residents would certainly provide useful information.

## **VI. PROJECT INFORMATION**

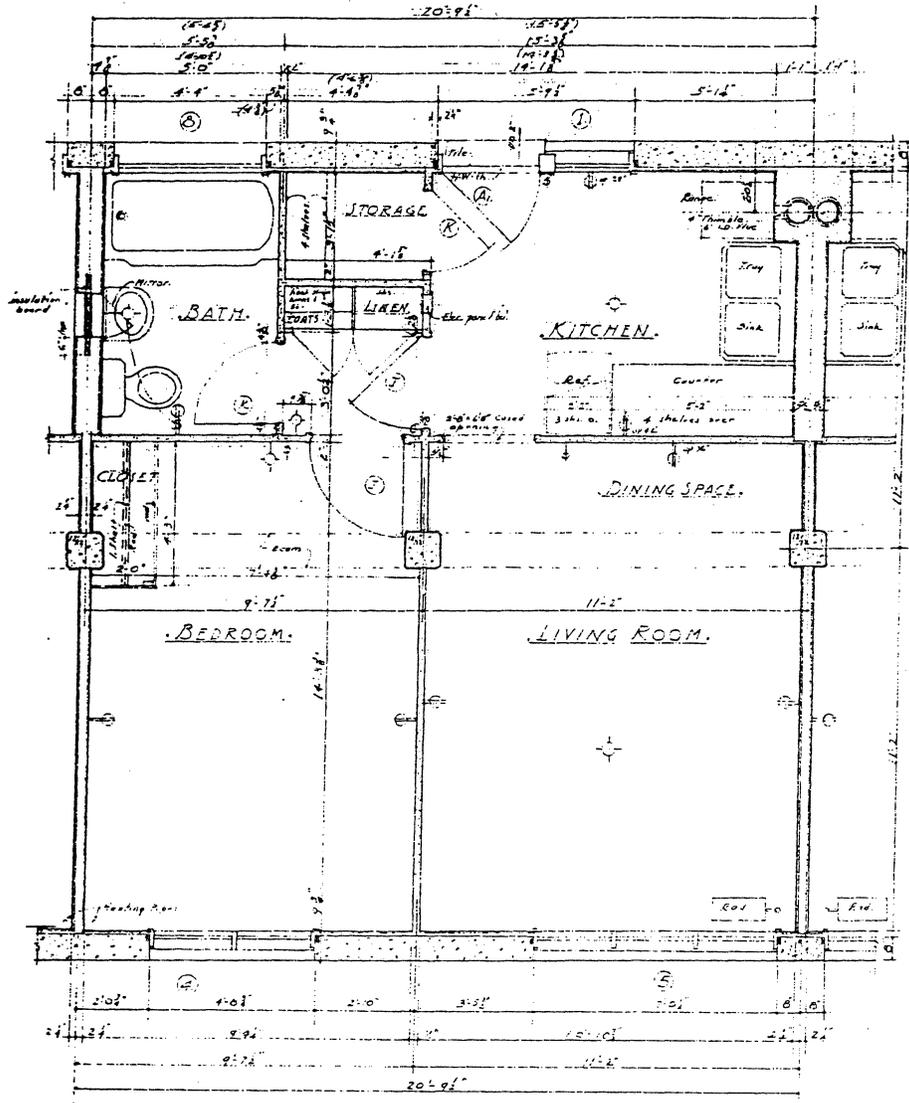
In 2000, William Kostura, of Oakland, and Carey and Co., of San Francisco, produced *Historic Architecture Survey Report for the Replacement of North Beach Place Housing Project, San Francisco, CA* for Robert Shaw and Associates, BRIDGE Housing Corporation, and the Mayor's Office of Housing. The demolition and replacement of North Beach Place is using federal funds, and is subject to NEPA and CEQA. The 2000 report was produced to satisfy the historic preservation elements of NEPA and CEQA.

The 2000 report found North Beach Place to be eligible for the National Register under Criterion C, for its design and for its association with two important Bay Area architects, Henry Gutterson and Ernest Born. It was significant at the local level, within the broader historic context of public housing in the United States before and shortly after World War II.

This HABS report was written in 2003 as mitigation for the demolition of North Beach Place. The author was William Kostura, an architectural historian. In addition to this written report, large-format archival photographs have been taken to document the appearance of this housing project.

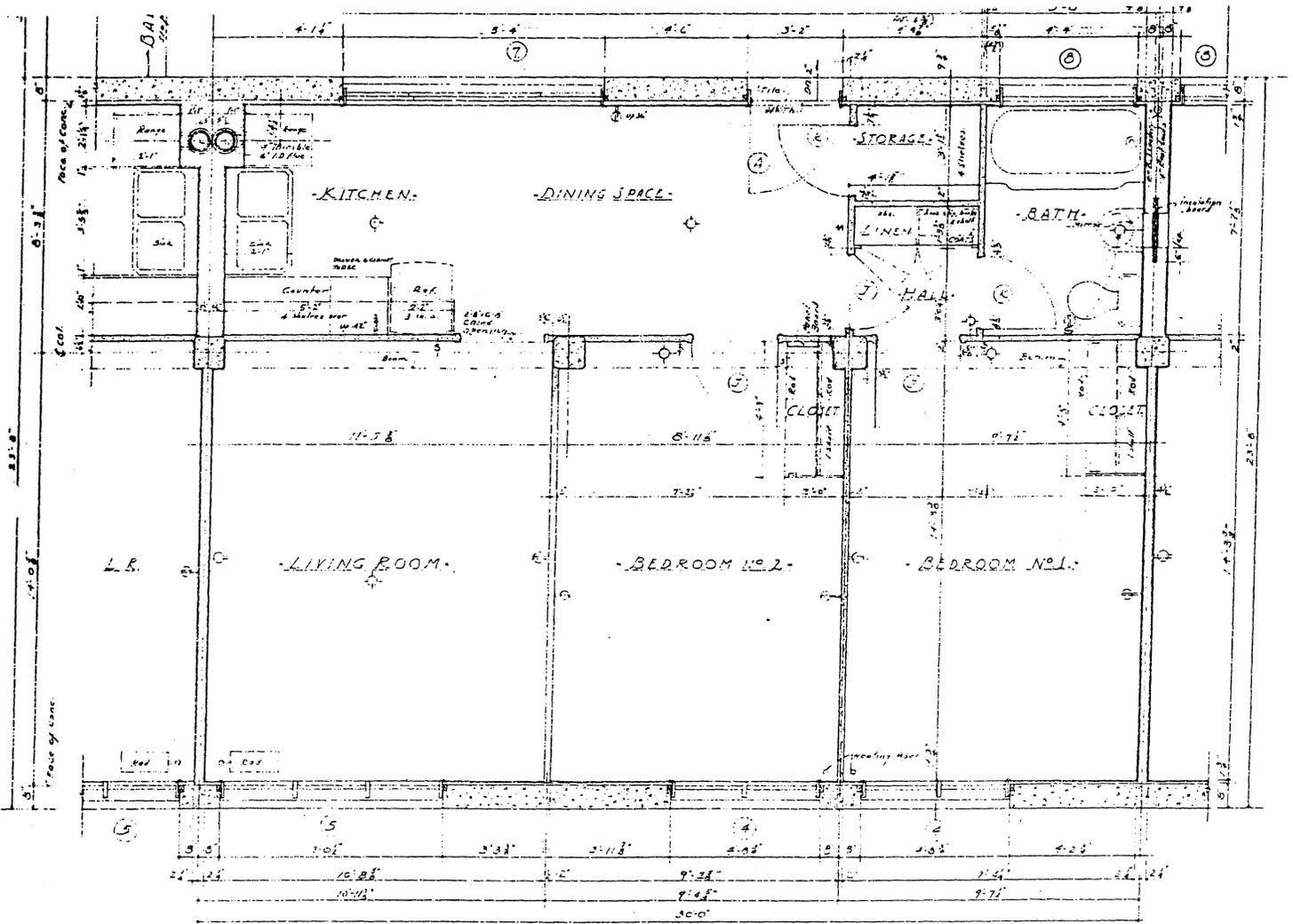


Site Planning Map for North Beach Place



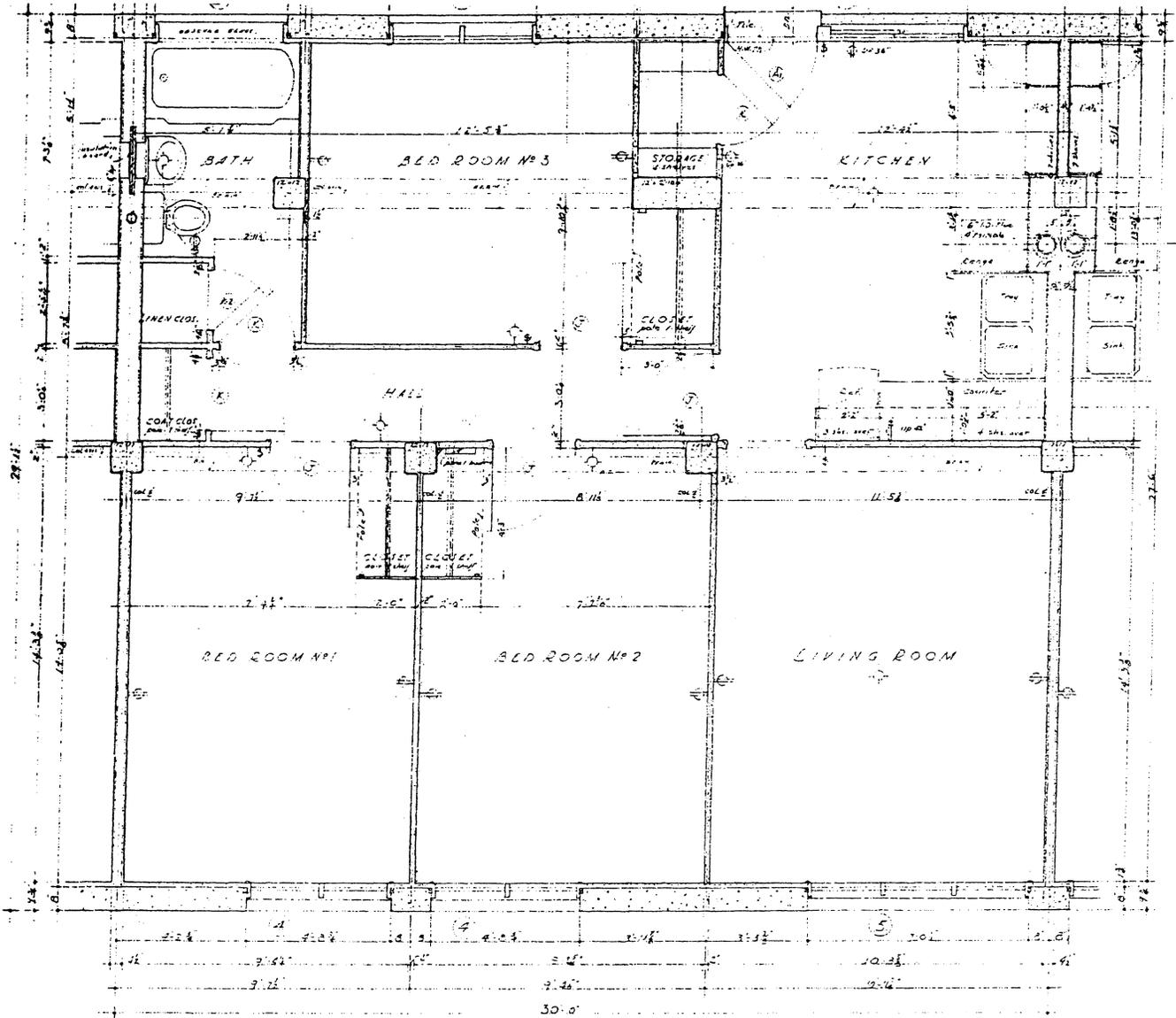
C-1 UNIT FOR GROUND, SECOND & THIRD FLOOR PLANS,  
BUILDINGS NOS. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

Typical plan for one-bedroom unit



**B-2** UNIT, SECOND & THIRD FLOOR, BUILDINGS NO. 6, 8, 10, 12, TYPICAL.  
For interior details see Sheets A-21, A-22, & A-23

Typical plan for two-bedroom unit



A-1 UNIT GROUND FLOOR PLAN for BLDGS No 6-10-12.

Typical plan for three-bedroom unit